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CALIFORNIA ART RESEARCH

VOLUME FOURTEEN

FIRST SERIES

Abstract from WPA Project 2874
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VOLUME I.

INTRODUCTION TO SERIES
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TOJETTI, DOMINICO
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RIX, JULIAN
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RICHARDSON, MARY C.
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GRANT, CHARLES
BREUER, HENRY J.
ATKINS, ARTHUR

VOLUME VI.

PUTNAM, ARTHUR
AITKEN, ROBERT I.
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PIAZZONI, GOTTARDO
BREMER, ANNE

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VAN SLOUN, FRANK

VOLUME IX.

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PEIXOTTO, ERNEST
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HANSEN, ARMIN

VOLUME X.

DICKMAN, CHARLES
MARTINEZ, XAVIER
PETERS, CHARLES R.
WORES, THEODORE

VOLUME XI.

CADENASSO, GUISEPPE
POOLE, NELSON
CUNEO, RINALDO
SPARKS, WILL

VOLUME XII.

ABDY, ROWENA M.
SARGENT, GENEVE R.
FORTUNE, E. CHARLTON

VOLUME XIII.

SANDONA, MATTEO
ILYIN FAMILY
DEL PINO, J. MOYA

VOLUME XIV.

STACKPOLE, RALPH
MORA, JO
BUFANO, BENIAMINO

VOLUME XV.

RANDOLPH, LEE
ALBRIGHT, GERTRUDE P.
ALBRIGHT, OLIVER
MACKY, CONSTANCE
MACKY, E. SPENCER

VOLUME XVI.

BRUTON SISTERS
FORBES, HELEN
HAMLIN, EDITH
CRAVATH, RUTH B.

VOLUME XVII.

HOWARD FAMILY

VOLUME XVIII.

BETHERS, RAY
POMMER, JULIUS
GAW, WILLIAM
SHERIDAN, JOSEPH M.

VOLUME XIX.

LABAUDT, LUCIEN
OLDFIELD, OTIS
BARNES, MATHEW

VOLUME XX.

PART ONE
YOUNG MODERNS

VOLUME XX.

PART TWO
YOUNG MODERNS

Vol. XIV

MONOGRAPHS

RALPH STACKPOLE

JO MORA

BENIAMINO BUFANO

Gene Hailey, Editor
Abstract from California Art Research
W.P.A. Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGES

RALPH STACKPOLE..... 1

Sculptor and Painter..... 1
Genealogy--Pioneer Heritage..... 2
Early Schooling--Tragedy..... 3
The Newspaper Solicitor--His Advice..... 4
Fine Art School--Putnam's Studio..... 5

First San Francisco Exhibit..... 6
San Francisco Disaster Artist Fund..... 6
Will Sparks As Prophet..... 7
Paris..... 8
Early San Francisco Commissions..... 8

Conflicting Mediums--New York Honors..... 11
Diligence--First Public Building--Marriage..... 12
California Society of Etchers..... 14
Panama-Pacific International Exposition..... 14
His Studio--Stackpole's Ideals..... 17

Medals--Jury of Awards..... 21
Jonas Bas-Relief--The Nymph..... 22
European Studies--His Letters..... 23
Return to America--Sacramento Work..... 31
Pacific Coast Pioneer "Direct Cut"..... 33

Miscellaneous Work--Versatility--Matisse..... 36
Wolfsohn Memorial and Mexico..... 39
San Francisco Stock Exchange Commission..... 43
Coit Memorial Frescoes--New Duties..... 46
Latest Commission--Conclusion..... 48

Representative Works..... 50
Private Collections..... 52
Permanent Collections..... 53
Exhibitions..... 54
Awards..... 57

Clubs..... 58
Instructor..... 58
Bibliography..... 59

JOSEPH JACINTO MORA..... 63

Genealogy..... 63
Early Years..... 65

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

PAGES

Bufano's Philosophy of Life..... 129
Other Statues by Bufano..... 131
Representative Works..... 133
Private Collections..... 134
Permanent Collections..... 134

Exhibitions..... 134
Awards..... 136
Clubs..... 136
Bibliography..... 137

R A L P H S T A C K P O L E

1885..... . . .

Biography and Works

"MAN AND HIS INVENTIONS"

PYLON, NEW SAN FRANCISCO STOCK EXCHANGE

RALPH STACKPOLE

SCULPTOR AND PAINTER

Among the hardy pioneers of San Francisco's art colony, Ralph Stackpole, the sculptor and painter, commands the attention of Californian patronage and international critics. Because of his constant growth, his balanced stride in his art work, he has been a leader and scout in new areas of aesthetic discovery. Just as his pioneer ancestors plodded along "one foot in front of the other" with their eyes on the far horizon, so has Stackpole been practical and yet led a-right by his vision in his adventures as an artist.

Now a proven figure in San Francisco's list of "Famous Artists" she has nourished, Stackpole has been a factor in the art life of California since his first years here. Not only has he taken part in famous controversies, courageously maintaining his views on art politics and art organizations, but his beliefs and teaching theories have taken concrete shape in the lives and works of innumerable pupils.

He is an individualist, but also an ardent believer in co-operative groups of artists. He has been one of the instigating forces behind several co-operative art galleries and has also fostered groups of artists who worked together on various private art projects and has been a co-ordinating personality in Federal Art Projects that have done civic

mural decorations. The new art remuneration, based on a wage scale rather then upon private patronage, or museum promotion, has always interested Stackpole. His economic relationship to his art career parallels that of most artists who pioneer in a machine age of mal-adjusted values. As a typical twentieth-century artist, looking forward to a new world, he is an archetype.

GENEALOGY--PIONEER HERITAGE

In most cases of American migration the cause was economic. From that cause was effected the major pioneer movement from East to West, which brought the ancestors of Ralph Stackpole, the sculptor, to the Pacific Coast.

George Fiddler, a pharmacist from Germany, settled in 1830 in Indiana. Some years later he married Jane Strain, of Scotch extraction. The development of Indiana was rapid. As the penalty for most booms is depression, the Fiddlers, through economic pressure, were forced to seek new frontiers.

James Jordan, a farmer of South Carolina, oppressed with the stubborness of his native soil, sought a more fertile land.

In the vanguard of those adventurous and hardy people who hit the "Oregon Trail" and settled about Gleace Creek, southwest Oregon, in 1849-53, were the families of Fiddler and James Jordan. George Fiddler shortly after established the first drug store in Eugene, Oregon. James

Jordan married Mary of the Fiddler family, and from that union was born Ethel Jordan.

Lured by the tales of opportunity that California held forth, Freemont Stackpole, a millwright, the son of John and Caroline (nee Wiggings) Stackpole of Maine, sailed via the "Horn" in 1875 to San Francisco. The transient nature of his work eventually led him to Happy Camp, an historical mining center of California. Here in 1884 he met and married Ethel Jordan.

Sawmill work covers much territory. The couple later settled at Williams where Freemont Stackpole combined ranching with the occupation of millwright. In this small community situated on Williams Creek, Josephine County, in southwest Oregon, Ralph Stackpole was born on May 1, 1885.

EARLY SCHOOLING--TRAGEDY

At six years of age, Ralph Stackpole was enrolled in the Williams grammar school. Two years before this, a strong inclination to draw possessed him. This penchant, aided and abetted by his father, considerably interfered with Ralph's acquisition of the "three R's."

One evening in 1895, with dinner prepared and awaiting the arrival of Freemont Stackpole, a workman from the mill brought news to Mrs. Stackpole that her husband had been killed by falling across a circular saw.

Freemont Stackpole carried no life insurance, and left his family little in the way of worldly goods. Employment for women in the "gay nineties" was seldom selective. Williams and its vicinity had little to offer. Domestic work with its meager wages or to cook for sawmill camps at better wages, comprised the lot. Mrs. Stackpole decided upon the latter.

His mother's work often shifted so that Ralph and his sister Abigail attended several schools in southwest Oregon. Drawing occupied much of Ralph's school hours and most of his leisure. One reason for this was that every boy of Oregon who drew a little during the '90's aspired to become a famous cartoonist like Homer Davenport, an Oregonian.

THE NEWSPAPER SOLICITOR--HIS ADVICE

The drudgery of cooking for sawmill camps palled. In 1899 Mrs. Stackpole and her two children moved to Grant's Pass, Oregon. Here, Mrs. Stackpole opened a small restaurant. In the latter part of 1900 there entered one day a solicitor for the San Francisco Chronicle. His sales talk to Mrs. Stackpole had fallen upon deaf ears until he stressed the qualities of the section devoted to art. To this she became attentive, and confided that her son although untrained, did similar work. He asked if she had a sample of Ralph's work. When he saw the work, whether through flattery in the hope of securing another subscription, or whether in sincere

appraisal, he did San Francisco's art world a favor. He praised highly, and advised that Ralph be sent to study in San Francisco. Needless to remark, Mrs. Stackpole signed for the newspaper on the dotted line and Ralph determined more than ever to become an artist.

FIRST ART SCHOOL--PUTNAM'S STUDIO

Ralph Stackpole in 1901, when sixteen years of age, entered the Mark Hopkins Art Institute of San Francisco. He enrolled in the drawing class under the instruction of Arthur Mathews. To defray his expenses Stackpole found it necessary to secure employment. He became a hat checker and ticket taker at Martin's Dance Hall on Market opposite Seventh Street.

After four months of drawing, Stackpole became interested in sculpture. He then entered the studio jointly occupied by Arthur Putnam, the celebrated animal sculptor, and Gottardo Piazzoni, the internationally known landscape painter. From these two masters he learned the fundamentals of drawing and sculpture. Piazzoni and Putnam took close to their hearts the ambitious student. Their art knowledge was freely imparted, and of it the youth drank deeply.

Art study was not a bed of roses for Stackpole. Though Putnam and Piazzoni broke crust with him they could not support him in continuance of his art studies. In 1903 some months were spent as a stake artist (marker) for an engineering company surveying the lines for the Grant's Pass-

Crescent City Railroad. To earn more money Stackpole worked during the summer months of 1904 as a mucker in an Arizona gold mine. The money earned during those summer months enabled him to apply himself to art studies during the winter. For developing an arm to wield mallet against chisel, these manual jobs were ideal. In the early part of 1905 he worked as office boy to Will Irwin, sports editor of the San Francisco Chronicle. His practical drawing education was further advanced by employment in the art departments of both the old San Francisco Bulletin and the Chronicle. Toward the close of 1905 Putnam and Piazzoni left for Europe and loneliness came to Stackpole.

FIRST SAN FRANCISCO EXHIBIT

At the San Francisco Art Association Spring Exhibition in March of 1906, Stackpole made his debut as a professional artist. His close association with Putnam was shown in the subject matter he exhibited. Putnam's favorite theme, the puma (a mountain lion), which brought him national fame, was also the subject which Stackpole exhibited.

SAN FRANCISCO DISASTER ARTIST FUND

Early in April of 1906 Heinz Springer of Lake County, California, an ardent admirer and patron of young artists, invited Stackpole and Leslie Hunter to visit his estate for a few weeks. They accepted and fortunately for them they did. San Francisco on April 18 of that year was visited by an

earthquake, followed by fire which laid waste the major part of the city. Stackpole's early work and personal belongings were destroyed along with the studio of Putnam and Piazzoni.

On Stackpole's return to San Francisco he found the artists' section completely destroyed. With his best friends and advisers in Europe, and without money, his plight was a sorry one. Telegraph wires to the East began to tell of the suffering of San Francisco's population. Of the countless organizations that solicited funds to care for the destitute, one fund came from the artists of New York. As a substantial sum was sent by them, Stackpole's share was $200.

Long desirous to visit Paris and to see his friends, he resolved to go to Putnam and Piazzoni in Paris, and through them and the facilities that Paris offered, to augment his knowledge of art.

WILL SPARKS AS PROPHET

Will Sparks, a San Francisco artist, writes in the San Francisco Call of July 15, 1906 and clearly demonstrates his acumen in predicting the future rise of Stackpole:

> "Ralph Stackpole, the young sculptor, has gone to Paris to remain an indefinite period. Stackpole has a great deal of talent and I have no doubt but that a year or two of work in the studios and foundries of the world's metropolis of art will put him in the front rank. At any rate I expect a great deal of him. Arthur Putnam, a co-worker of Stackpole's, is in Paris at the present time, and together the two expect to take up bronze-casting. In what manner they expect to take up this study I have not been in-

formed. Many of the best foundries of Paris guard their mixing and fluxing like Government secrets, but no doubt California grit and genius will find a way to knowledge."

PARIS

Putnam, Piazzoni, and their wives met Stackpole in Paris. They rented a two-story house with a garret in the Paris suburb of Neuilly sur Seine. The lower floor of the house was occupied by Putnam to be used as home, studio, and foundry. The Piazzonis had the second, and Stackpole the garret.

Stackpole enrolled at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in the sculpture class under the renowned teacher, Anton Mercie. While in Paris Stackpole did not go constantly to school. For months he would study in the art galleries and with Putnam without going near the Ecole des Beaux Arts. When the Putnams left Paris, followed later by the Piazzonis, he moved to the Montparnasse section and rented a studio in an old monastery. Here he lived the typical life of a Parisian art student.

EARLY SAN FRANCISCO COMMISSIONS

When some two years had been spent in Paris Stackpole longed for America. In the late spring of 1908 he returned to San Francisco, and opened his studio at 728 Montgomery Street. In that block, the former haunt of pioneer artists--and today the rendezvous of many of the local art colony--he began his art career.

Knowledge of Stackpole's conscientious work in Paris had preceeded his arrival. Before his shingle was out, local families, interested in patronizing young artists, had work for him to do. So that something may be learned of those early commissions, his participation in exhibits during the latter part of 1908 will be omitted. The San Francisco Chronicle of March 21, 1909, of his first commission reported:

> "Two exquisitely finished busts are the latest productions of the sculptor, Ralph Stackpole. The busts are of Rosalie Heynemann, the eight-year-old daughter, and Lloyd Heynemann, the ten-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Heynemann of 2508 Fillmore Street. The bust of the girl is in clay and both as a portrait and work of art is splendid. The bust of the boy has been cast in bronze. Both of these children are beautifully featured and are excellent subjects for the sculptor. Their parents express themselves as being highly delighted with Stackpole's work and are having the bust of the little girl hewn by him in marble."

Lucy B. Jerome of the San Francisco Call of May 6, 1909, reports an important commission of Stackpole's, and gives this interesting glimpse of him:

> "At present Stackpole is engaged on the head of the ten-year-old son of Leon Sloss, Jr., whose features, so say the sculptor, partake of the qualities of the Greeks in the regularity and perfection of modelling, and who therefore makes a most interesting subject. Stackpole is a picture of a Paris artist in his atelier when at work. His costume is picturesque and his surroundings equally so. Work means work with him, and outside influences are not permitted to enter into his working hours."

Within a few months of executing his early commissions, Stackpole was called upon to meet in three dimensional representation the extremes of age. Former criticisms have

applied to his portraiture of youth. Of the other extreme, Lucy B. Jerome in the Call of July 4, 1909, under the heading, "Beautiful Statue of Woman Evokes Praise," stated:

> "Stackpole has been engaged on an interesting head and bust, that of the grandmother of Cyrus Cuneo, the young illustrator whose name is well-known through his clever work in the London Graphic. The grandmother, who is 80 years of age, sat for the sculpture portrait with some misgivings, but the result has verified the predictions made concerning it. The head shows a perfect likeness, and the modeling of the various characteristics of old age, the lights and shadows of the wrinkled countenance, the deep furrows, and above all the light of experience, seem to permeate the fine, rugged old head, and evidence that Stackpole is rapidly finding himself and that more works like this last one will put him a long forward step on the difficult road of Art."

Stackpole, ever meticulous in care of detail and representation, became dissatisfied with the Leon Sloss, Jr. portrait. Of the second execution of this work, Miss Jerome of the Call of August 1, 1909, said:

> "Ralph Stackpole is one of those who have remained in the city during the summer months, and he has been finishing up the bust of Leon Sloss, Jr. at the Sloss country home in San Rafael. This is the second bust of the lad, the first not being satisfactory to the sculptor, who had it destroyed."

Apropos of the Cuneo grandmother portrait: when exhibited at the California Conservatory, Margaret Marshall Doyle of the Call of November 10, 1909, reported:

> "There are two attractive busts on view, the work of Ralph Stackpole. One of these, the bust of Signora Garbini is the property of S. Cuneo. The other, the study for a Bacchante, is a very graceful head, attracting considerable attention."

CONFLICTING MEDIUMS--NEW YORK HONORS

Through his association with Putnam and Piazzoni, Stackpole's course in art has been deeply influenced. When he observed Putnam's masterful handling of sculpture, he abandoned his ambitions to become a cartoonist. Piazzoni's influence in painting by 1911 became as strong. To settle the conflict of two mediums, Stackpole decided to experiment with palette and brush. The decision led him to New York where he studied painting under Robert Henri.

After three months of painting, Stackpole received a commission to execute a bronze statuette of Edith Altchal, who later became the wife of Governor Lehmann of New York. His successful handling of the Altchal statuette brought him an invitation to show at the Whitney Warren Architectural Exhibit. In the report of Stackpole's success in the New York exhibit, Katherine Clark Prosser of the San Francisco Call of June 25, 1911, wrote:

> "Friends of Ralph Stackpole are showering the artist with congratulations on his latest success. Word from the East tells of the recent winning by Stackpole of the first prize in a contest for a head of David of Bible fame. Stackpole's conception of the shepherd king done in plaster carried off highest honor in competition with 200 contestants and the first prize of $100 was awarded the San Franciscan."

The New York success led Stackpole back to San Francisco to again specialize in sculpture.

DILIGENCE--FIRST PUBLIC BUILDING--MARRIAGE

In his rise to recognition, luck played no part in Stackpole's success. Only through his industry and intense application was his art recognition effected. His faculty of sustained effort is well exemplified by this article taken from the San Francisco Call of July 7, 1912:

> "It would be impossible to imagine an artist more industrious than Ralph Stackpole, who is at present occupying the old studio at 728 Montgomery Street made locally famous by a long line of occupants from Jules Tavernier down through Mathews, Joullin, Martinez, Dickman and others to the present tenant. Here Stackpole works from a reasonable hour in the morning to a reasonably late hour in the afternoon--a fact all the more remarkable when it is known he lives on 41st Avenue, which is nearer to the Pacific Ocean than it is from his studio to the Bay. His industry takes the form of keeping several things 'going' at both his studio and residence (which, by the way is the one that was formerly occupied by Putnam). Just now he is working three portrait busts, among which is one of Piazzoni. Although the bust was only recently begun, the likeness in clay is already of the profound sort that is a thing apart from the mere reproduction of the original. It is this quality, combined with a subtle interesting technique, filled with freshness and feeling, that gives to Stackpole's work in portraiture its undoubted distinction."

Of the individual treatment given by Stackpole to his sitters the Call of September 1, 1912, remarked:

> "The bronze bust of Professor Hilgard, by Ralph Stackpole, which recently arrived from the East, where the casting was made, has been on view at the shop of Vickery, Atkins and Torrey. It is destined later to be placed in the new Hall of Agriculture at the Iniversity of California.

> The subject was one which presented peculiar difficulties, and the marked excellence of the result speaks highly of Stackpole's ability. The design considered as a silhouette, is exceedingly well thought out in poise and pattern, and the treatment of the countenance is full of dexterity and knowledge. Individuality in sculpture is sufficiently rare to call for remarks, and there is distinct individuality in Stackpole's work, both in the manner in which he approaches his work and in his technique, which has strength, character and sublety. He has been particularly successful in the difficult art of portrait sculpture, combining in his work the faithful likeness with the imagination of the artist."

Of the numerous articles that dealt with Stackpole's early expression through the medium of sculpture, that of the Call of October 6, 1912 gave this additional information:

> "And speaking of professors, Ralph Stackpole is making a bust of Prof. Charles Frederick Holder, who fills a unique place among writers of popular science. The more one sees of Stackpole's work, the more apparent becomes his unusual ability as a portrait sculptor. He seems to be able to catch those subtle and evanescent shades of expression that underlie all true portraiture, and this with a peculiarly free and dexterous technique. The head of a girl,re-recently done, shows this quality of delicacy to a marked degree. The expression seems as though it were breathed on the statue. It seems to possess an infusion of life. The thing that he gives is in the 'beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh.' He has also done two children's heads with consummate delicacy and charm."

The same article carried this information of Stackpole's first commission for sculptured ornamentation for a building:

> "Stackpole has executed the details of a canopy which will be part of the ornamentation of

> the new Masonic Temple. These details consist of figure motives, surrounding four niches, and for these niches he has also modelled from allegorical figures. The work has individual and artistic merit of a high order and a most gratifying architectural harmony."

Of the Masonic Building commission the Call of February 2, 1913, stated:

> "His figures and detail for the Masonic Temple, in course of construction, were accounted so successful that he has been commissioned to execute some more figures for the same building."

In 1912 Stackpole was married to Adele Barnes, a member of the local art colony. Their son, Peter Stackpole, is today a nationally known photographer. He is connected with Life, the new photographic magazine in New York.

CALIFORNIA SOCIETY OF ETCHERS

A need for a society of etchers had been long felt in San Francisco Art circles. Of its organization the San Francisco Chronicle of January 19, 1913, wrote:

> "The officers of the society (California Society of Etchers) are President, Robert B. Harsha of Stanford University; secretary Pedro J. Lemos of the San Francisco Institute of Art Faculty; treasurer, Gotterdo Piazzoni and executive committee, Ralph Stackpole."

PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION

In honor of the builders and toilers who completed the Panama Canal, San Francisco in 1915 held an exposition. To this exposition (Panama-Pacific International) was sent the work of the world's greatest artists. In scope of archi-

tectural design, few expositions have ever exceeded its magnificence. With its many world famous sculptors, Stackpole was locally commissioned to execute many subjects. The San Francisco Examiner of August 9, 1914 tells of Stackpole's work:

> "The Spanish Portal of the Varied Industries Building of the P.P.I.E.. The design is by Bliss and Faville and the sculptured figures by Ralph Stackpole, both of San Francisco. The portal is nearly 60 feet high, and strikes the visitor impressively as he enters the ground through the Fillmore Street entrance."

A detailed description of Stackpole's work in the exposition is given by Lucy White in the Overland Monthly Magazine of September 1914:

> "Looking out upon the South Gardens, the southern facade of the Palace of Varied Industries will be done by Ralph Stackpole. His figure, 'The Man with the Pick,' for niches in this wall is much admired. Stackpole is a pupil of Mercie, but his work shows signs of the influence of Constantin Meunier. Like the great Belgian he is fond of making truthful and sympathetic portrayals of the types who play their part in the great industrial epic of today. His interest is not an affectation. Before he became a sculptor he worked in mines, and his sketches of workman had attracted wide attention even before he went to Europe to study. He will also do panels and figures for the keystone of the arch of the main doorway.
>
> "The tympanum, for the lesser doors of the Palace of Industries, will be set within an embellishment which will constitute one of the purest as well as the costliest architectural reproductions upon the Exposition grounds. This doorway is an exact replica of the famous Salamanca Cathedral in Spain, and was reproduced at the cost of $15,000. The tympanum, which is

the work of Stackpole, is the only deviation from the portal copied."

John D. Barry in his book, "The City of Domes," paid this compliment to Stackpole's work upon the doorway:

> "As we drew near the Avenue of Progress we saw the magnificent doorway of the Varied Industries, overladen with ornamentation. It was clever of Faville to put that doorway just in this spot, where it could be seen by the crowds that entered by Fillmore Street. It comes from Santa Cruz Hospital in Toledo, Spain, built by the Spanish architect, De Egas, for Cardinal Mendoza, one of the most famous portals in Europe. The adaptation has been wonderfully done by Ralph Stackpole, with those figures of the American workman carrying a pick at either side and the semi-circular panel just above the door and the group on top. That panel is one of the finest pieces of sculpture in the Exposition. It has tenderness and reverence. It's the kind of thing the medieval sculptors who worked on religious themes would have been enthusiastic over. See how simple it is, just a group of workers, with the emblems of their work, the women spinning with the lamb close by, the artist and the artisan, and the woman with the design of a vessel form in her hands, suggesting commerce. The single figure in the center is the intelligent workman who works with his hands and knows how to work too. The group on top is a very pretty conception, the old world handing its burden to the younger world, with its suggestions of the European coming over here and raising American children."

A. Sterling Calder, the American sculptor, in his article in the San Francisco Examiner of February 21, 1915, said that:

> "One of the richest doorways, that of the Palace of Varied Industries, contains pediments, groups and figures by Stackpole."

The same author in his book "The Sculpture and Mural Decorations of the Expositions," imparted this information on Stackpole's "Worship" that graced the Altar of the Fine Arts Building:

> "This lovely adoring figure, pure, devoted, appealing, emblematic of art tending the fires of Inspiration, is placed upon the Altar before the Palace of Fine Arts, and can be seen only from across the waters of the lagoon. Her perfect self-surrender to her holy task of guarding inspiration's flame is a sermon and a poem. She is the worshipful spirit for whose reward the glow of genius is spent. She is an image of the perfect reverence for an ideal. It is interesting to note that she is by the same hand that fashioned those rugged laborers on the Palace of Varied Industries. The altar of Fine Arts separated from the beholder by the width of the beautiful lagoon, set before the great rotunda, and surrounded by sculptured barriers and growing green buttress-walls of flowers that quite shut it off from all access of the passerby, has the effect of a shrine. This sense of seclusion adds much to the impressiveness of the statue."

Stackpole was represented on the great Siena pedestals before the Palace of Education by "Thought," and was allotted space for four subjects in the Palace of Fine Arts Building. For his "Group of Sloss Children" he received honorable mention.

HIS STUDIO--STACKPOLE'S IDEALS

A detailed description of Stackpole's numerous works and exhibits during 1915-16-17 would be useful in depicting his growth but cannot be included here.

In the Wasp of January 19, 1918, Louise E. Taber describes a visit to Stackpole's studio:

> "In the delightful old building on Montgomery Street where artistic ideals have made their home, I went along the narrow hall and at the farther end found Stackpole's door. Before knocking I paused to look through the glass doors behind me at a view of charm and interest. True it has no eloquence; it is just the backs of houses facing each other and making a kind of court, but there is a wealth of sombre colors, brown and dull grays predominating, even chimney tops having a fascination all their own. I heard a distant voice singing a Latin air--a song dear to the hearts of fishermen lolling in their little boats along the shores of Naples---and I forgot that not many blocks away is Market Street, the heart of a different world in which there is no intimate--no foreign charm. Here were just quiet sunshine and artistic shadows, a scene which could have been stolen from Montmartre and almost, I looked for the Mansard-roof of Mimi, with its picturesque window beside which an old chimney would jot up.
>
> "The sculptor opened the door; and it added another bit to the picture, for his corduroy trousers and gray shirt, bespattered with clay, were in perfect harmony with the color scheme.
>
> "In the little fireplace, the burning wood was snapping and the smoke made a grayish haze in the big room. All about were figures and busts modelled in clay--some life-size, others small.
>
> "I took the chair before the fire; he perched himself on the other seat, a low ladder of three or four steps.
>
> "I soon realized that I had come at the wrong moment.
>
> "His thoughts were centered in the figure upon which he had been working, and it was no easy matter for his mind to slip away from the absorbing subject."

Stackpole is ever laudatory his early local teachers. A further quotation from Miss Taber's article bears out his appreciation of their teaching:

> "It was a reference to Arthur Putnam, which brought the first gleam of interest into his eyes and gladly he told me of his admiration and friendship for this great sculptor, whose genius is not honored here as it is in the art centers of Europe, and in New York, where his work attracted immediate attention.
>
> "'I was in Paris in 1906, and remained two years,' he told me, 'and I lived with Putnam and studied in the Beaux Arts, but the best teachers I ever had are Putnam and Piazzoni. Early in my career, I did not know which branch of Art would be my life work, painting or sculpture. It was not until I had returned from Paris that the actual decision came, and it was brought about through securing an order to model a figure, and making a success, I kept on. But even now I turn to painting sometimes, because I love it.'"

As Miss Taber observed the studio she continued:

> "Looking about at the life-like figures, I wondered whence comes a sculptor's inspiration to make a living thing from an uninteresting lifeless lump of clay, but from his words I gathered the sculptor's joy in working out in this gray earth that which already has been conceived in its perfection in the mind of the artist.
>
> "'Some sculptors work for just one thing,' he said, 'and thus they become specialists, but Michael Angelo and Rodin combined the three--construction, volume, and movement. The true artist is the one who can produce the model's character. To do this he must be a master of construction. An artist must be able to understand character; otherwise he is making merely a photographic study and is revealing nothing of the sitter's inner self. Without character nothing in art is beautiful, for character is the essential truth of any object. The face means nothing, no matter whether beautiful, or ugly, without the revelation of the inner self,

> and it is for the artist to see beneath the skin and find the soul, the feeling that the face is capable of expressing.
>
> "'Everything in nature has character, and it is the work of the artist, the real artist, to find that which is hidden--without it no inner truth is expressed. There is beauty everywhere and if we fail to see it, it is because we do not know how to use our eyes.
>
> "'Truth is the foundation of all that is great in art. If a work is truly great, it makes no difference whether in sculpture, painting, literature or music; it is because, and only because it is the reproduction of truth. People walk the earth without seeing, but the true artist is the one whose emotions and understanding are alive to that which is beneath external appearances. Copying nature does not mean anything. Many an artist copies without seeing, and for this reason he never will produce a work of real value. To create a living figure the sculptor must be keenly alive to human nature and be able to delve deeply into the reading of character.'"

Attracted by the variety of subjects about his studio Miss Taber drew from Stackpole this interesting discussion of his technique:

> "Looking about at his work the figure of a girl who some day will sit on the base of a fountain in a private home, at the group of children (Mortimer Fleishhacker's children) and at the various busts, I wondered how a sculptor could pass such precious work into the hands of a cold-blooded marble cutter, and said as much.
>
> "'I cut my own marble,' he told me. Then he showed me the instruments he himself has made for this work. 'Very few sculptors do this work today, but I want to do it--because marble has life and while working on it very often the original figure or bust can be improved upon.'
>
> "He placed two figures together, one in clay, the other, its replica, in marble--as yet unfinished, and the life and light of the marble

were strikingly apparent, also the perfection which was working out in the construction--especially was it noticeable in the development of the arms.

"So interesting did this sculptor make my visit that I had no notion of the length of time I was staying--until the fire died and the light became dim. Then he lit the kerosene lamp--neither gas, nor electricity is there--and against the gray wrought plaster walls were thrown life-like shadows of the figures standing about; so life-like that it seemed as if they must move.

"Near the lamp was the miniature figure of a woman, her face turned toward the light, and the golden glow over the pure lines of her body made the marble take on a warmth that was almost like living flesh.

"It was hard to leave such an alluring workshop, and even at the door I lingered--held by the charm of the room with its figures and its soft shaded light, hanging beside the fireplace, making those beautiful shadows. There is nothing about that suggests idleness, there are no 'artistic' accessories, no 'furnishings'; it is the studio of a man who lives to work, and like the room of his neighbor--Piazzoni, down the hall, it has taken on the sincere and diligent character of its occupant."

MEDALS--JURY OF AWARDS

Stackpole has been the recipient of many awards. Before passing into other important phases of his career we should mention a few of the awards received by him. From the San Francisco Art Association's Annual Exhibitions which were held in 1918 and 1920, he received the gold medal on both occasions. Of an award received in Los Angeles, California, the San Francisco Chronicle of December 29, 1918, reported:

> "Ralph Stackpole has been awarded the first prize ($150) for the best piece of work shown at the recent Liberty Art Exhibit in Los Angeles. The sculpture was that of a kneeling woman, a small figure in bronze delicately modeled. Stackpole has also completed a portrait bust of Leopold Godowsky the musician."

Anna Cora Winchell, writing for the Chronicle of February 23, 1919, stated of the prize-winning statue:

> "Dr. W. S. Porter has purchased the 'Kneeling Figure,' by Ralph Stackpole, a small bronze well modeled and most graceful and natural in its lines. This week the bronze is on view in the Tolerton Print Rooms."

On the Jury of Awards of the forty-third annual exhibition of the San Francisco Art Association Stackpole served as a member. He has served in this capacity on numerous occasions.

JONAS BAS-RELIEF--THE NYMPH

In 1920 Stackpole designed a bas-relief of Abraham Jonas of Oakland, California, of which the Oakland Tribune of October 23, 1920, said:

> "The work of Abraham Jonas, business man of Oakland, as a leader in Temple Sinai Congregation, was given recognition and honor at a special service in the Temple last night, at which a bronze bas-relief of the worker was dedicated.
>
> "The bas-relief of Jonas will be mounted in the vestibule of the Temple."

Members of the local art colony were surprised to learn in 1920, that Mr. and Mrs. Stackpole had amicably agreed to separate. Divorce proceedings were instituted shortly after.

Moving through numerous works designed by Stackpole during the remainder of 1920 we come to his conception of a nymph which was shown at the McCann Co. Exhibit held in San Francisco. In the San Francisco Chronicle of February 6, 1921, Marjorie C. Driscoll, reported:

> "Ralph Stackpole contributes the sculpture, a lovely little marble nymph. He has set himself a very difficult problem in the pose of his model, who is seated with the right knee raised to form an abrupt angle and the body swung to the right. It is a sharp departure from the conventional pose, but the gain in alertness, delicacy and a certain suggestion of primitive naivete is great. The nymph is caught in an instant of surprise, almost of startled timidity, and the sense of arrested motion is excellent."

We forego mentioning the numerous articles that deal with the above works of Stackpole and enter upon a new phase of his career.

EUROPEAN STUDIES--HIS LETTERS

Of the rewards that accrue from perserverance and hard work, Stackpole had received a sufficient amount to satisfy a desire of long standing. This desire to further his knowledge of the technique of painting could now be fulfilled He prepared again for a trip to Europe. Piazzoni, long restless to see his native Switzerland, decided to accompany Stackpole for a few months. A few months after their departure, Norma Abrams of the San Francisco Chronicle of July 31, 1921, wrote:

> "Two of San Francisco's best known sculptors, Arthur Putnam and Ralph Stackpole recently met in Paris, according to letters received in the city from the latter. According to Stackpole, Putnam with his family is living in Paris. Stackpole, who is traveling on the Continent with Piazzoni, is at present in Locarno, where he is making a study of the Swiss peasant types. Later he expects to go to Rome to take up more serious study."

After a few months sketching with Piazzoni in Switzerland, Stackpole left for Italy. The San Francisco Chronicle of February 5, 1922 published the following:

> "About forty miles from Florence, in the seclusion of a mountain monastery, Ralph Stackpole, one of the prominent persons identified with the San Francisco Sculptors, is established in a tiny studio where he is pursuing his studies of Italian sculpture. Very recently Edgar Walter, another of the same local group, who is also studying upon the continent, visited with him. Together they made a brief tour of the galleries near Florence. 'I am more convinced of the futility of the so-called ultra-modern movement in sculpture,' Stackpole stated in a recent letter to friends in San Francisco. 'After months spent in Italy and upon the continent, I feel it is possible to find everything that is needful to the inspiration and expression of art in Botticelli.'"

Under the heading "World Restlessness Echoed in Art, Holds Noted Californian, Traveling in Europe," Ray Boynton of the San Francisco Chronicle of July 16, 1922, wrote:

> "Two recent letters from Ralph Stackpole, who has been studying in Italy and France, written to a fellow artist in San Francisco, should be interesting to people here in giving some ideas of the conditions abroad as reflected in some of the big exhibitions. They are the reflections of a man who has reached a considerable maturity in his work both as a sculptor and as a draughtsman, and has always preserved an open mind toward the work of his contemporaries.

"They also contain a not entirely flattering comment on the conditions that confront the artist here at home. Europe, which suffered so much more than we in the war, is still able to notice the work which is being done by its artists.

"Stackpole's own work is well enough known here to need no comment. These two letters make their point quite clear."

"Venice, May 25, 1922

"Dear P....:

"You describe the feeling of the world restlessness very well. There seems to be no peace here nor there. Many times I wish I were back there in the studio with material for work, etc., then when I read the clippings you send, I am glad to be here, yet I do not feel so keenly as I do there. I have seen the people and their life at close range. You seem so much more in touch with humanity here than in America, and things go so smoothly if you let them. I worked a good deal at Settignano, painted and modeled and drew and as a result have nothing saleable. I worked only to learn and what I learned cannot be taken away.

"Well, Venice is always Venice, very hot at present. I can understand some of the Venetian talk; it is beautiful and amusing. The second day here I went to a restaurant like the Magot. I sat down at one table where there was a clean cloth, near a little unshaven man of about forty-two and with a Naso Rosa that would make J. look pale. He saw I was not a Venetian and commenced to talk French, said he was an artist; I assumed copies; but from the things he said I began to become interested. He asked me to his studio and, believe me, he is some artist--the best portrait painter in Venice, and has on a commission to decorate a church for which forty artists competed. His work is extremely able and on the Tintoretto order. But Tintoretto has been dead many years.

"The more I see, the more I believe that we have to start a new course. Well, the Professor, as they call him at the restaurant, and I are friends. We went there every day and one day took a trip to Padua and saw the Giottos, which seem just as fine as when we saw them. There are some frescoes by Mantegna in a church near the Giotto chapel done when he was 17 years old. Talk about talent, they are his best work and I think far above his oils. The Donatellos and Giotto frescoes are still the same great things.

EXPOSE OF POST-WAR EUROPEAN ART

"The International Exhibition was advertised with all the effort and skill of posters and press, etc., reduced fares on the railroads; the Prince came to open the show; there was a regatta with decorated and wonderful gondolas rowed by men in costume. The Grand Canal was a mass of color. It was a great holiday for everyone. The Mayor in the evening held a banquet for the artists and you couldn't imagine anything done better. But the show--it is a fine portrait of world conditions, unsettled, revolutionary, stupid, chaotic. Two little pictures by Monet in the French section, two pieces of sculpture in the Belgian section, the rest, sometimes more or less good but the greater pure bunk. The things by the young Italian (recently dead) that we saw in Paris with the art negre influence were, I thought, the best things in the Italian section. Mancine had several; they have strength and are typical of a certain Italian taste. Marchand and Barnard (French) are worth watching. Tito, the crack Venetian, I do not like at all. The German section was a nightmare.

PEOPLE TAKE ART EXHIBITS SERIOUSLY

"The people here take the exhibition very seriously and they are fine hosts; they treat the artists with great courtesy. The woods are full of painters, many French and many English lady water colorists. At every corner they are at work and the children say: 'Isn't it beautiful?'

"The Tintorettos and Titians I like even better after seeing great Florentine primitives although I hold Giotto and his bunch a little higher. The Venetians I still appreciate with great respect. It reminds one that art is art no matter what school.

FLORENTINE EXHIBIT

"The spring exhibition in Florence was gotten up with elaborate arrangements. A new building was built in one of the little gardens, Piazza Cavour, a fine little building. They also had a holiday on the opening day and edicts to the people 'Cittadino Florentine,' etc., were posted on the walls telling them of the importance of the show."

The second letter is from Paris and continues with more information of Venice:

"Everything here seems so alive and fresh and the modern art that I have seen here is far above what you see south. However, with this enthusiasm for France I still have a great love for Italy. Italy is my dream and the few months spent there leave me with souvenirs of pure beauty.

"Venice is a wonderful place, and if it wasn't for the tourist it would be a paradise, but even they spoil it less than other places. The people in Venice are much gayer and happier than in any other place I have been. Venice is full of artists; they are painting on every corner, but did you ever see a good picture of Venice? I never have. It is just like making a picture of the Venus de Milo--better not make it.

"Information--The churches in Italy were painted with a coat of plaster after the pest, as thousands went into the churches to die, so they dis-infected by covering over everything.

"Tintoretto did the decorations in the Scuola San Rocco when he was a political prisoner. He did them in about a year; he had bad materials and lacked some colors, so that helped them to turn black.

"The general trend in the modern thought in art, I think, is better. It is getting away from impressionism and leaning more toward the best Italian fresco painters.

"They are paying a great deal more attention to form and to better and more pure color."

As Stackpole was in Europe shortly after that continent's emergence from war, how its economic disruption and chaotic conditions affected art becomes of interest to the student.

The letter that follows was published by Ray Boynton in the San Francisco Chronicle of February 11, 1923:

"Dear Sir:

"Although it is still winter the days are beginning to be a bit longer and it will soon be two years since we started together on the trip. As for me, I don't feel any wiser than when we left. My hut is crowded full of beautiful things, so full that I could go back to California and build a cabin of driftwood and just sit down and think. But I know that would only last so long. I would be like D---, would want to go again. As for art, I see more plainly how far there is to go--that there is no end.

"Paris seems to be a great laboratory of art, where they experiment and dissect and analyze, and it is just this that keeps the thing alive, and what is being done in other countries can be easily traced to its source, which is here. Of course, as you know in these experiments sometimes they forget nature and go to extremes, but that does not last long. Nature is too strong and pulls them back. When people are taught to see things from one angle it is a terrible job to get them to see from another. The impressionist took us back to nature, out of doors, to the air and sunshine and light; and now the form and design movement--it seems to me the road is well prepared to go ahead and all that is necessary for art is faith.

RECOMMENDS AN ARTISTS' STRIKE

"I wonder what would be the result out there if the artists would strike and not show for two or three years. They would not lose and it might wake the people up. They would only save the price of frames and bother. If only some of the enthusiasm and interest and intelligence that is here could be transplanted there. It would be a big help, but that would not come in a minute. But you are right--art cannot die, even if the autos do run over it. I feel a wonderful intelligence in art here, now. It lacks many things (not always) such as faith, nobility of subject, etc., but when I walked through the Salon d'Automne I was astonished to see how much fine work there was.

"I am glad I worked after nature as much as I did. I find I can stylize a bit now and keep the life. I hope to keep on and get firmer and more telling form and decorative design."

The last of these letters from Europe by Stackpole to his friend and teacher was embodied in an article by Harry Noyes Pratt, art critic of the San Francisco Chronicle of June 17, 1923:

"Paris, May 15, 1923

"Dear Piazzoni:

"Today the vernissage of the Salon des Tuileries makes a great mark on the page of French art. I feel without exaggerated enthusiasm that today is one of the greatest days in art since the Gothic or since the Italian Renaissance. The Salon is an effort by a few leading progressive artists to unite all the good modern art into one small, well arranged exhibition where it can be seen.

"The big salons are too overloaded with officials, influence, friends, etc., which makes a combination in which the new work can not be seen at all, and this breaking away, starting a new salon, is the remedy. This salon had to come and there are many, or rather one great

> reason behind it. It makes an absolute fact that the Grand Style is back and the artist in his vision was never so free as today."

Of the progress made by Stackpole in the field of painting, and of his participation in the exhibitions of the Paris Salons, we learn in the article by Mr. Pratt:

> "The ordinary mortal is satisfied with expression along one line of endeavor. The true artist, who is seldom satisfied with anything, is not content unless he can express himself in various mediums, and preferably in more than one of the arts. And so it may or may not come as a surprise to those who know Ralph Stackpole as a sculptor, to find him represented with a canvas in the showing of the Independents of Paris. So far as I am able to ascertain, Stackpole had not used oils prior to his stay in France.
>
> "It is a new activity, a result of the association with a younger group of artists who are striving for strength and simplicity, together with freedom from the bonds of artistic tradition.
>
> "'Giovanna,' the canvas in question, has met with the approval of the French critics. Its utter simplicity and charm, with its splendid vigor of line and color, seem to place our San Francisco man in their estimation as one of the best of the American group. We claim Ralph Stackpole of course, for although he is an Oregonian by birth--he had his education in our institution under Piazzoni."

As Stackpole's "Giovanna" was painted while in Paris, it seems desirable to know in what manner it was received by French critics. Robert Rey, an eminent critic of Paris, in his review of the Salon des Independents exhibit for Art et Decoration of March 1923, wrote:

> "It happens, it always happens that strangers give us lessons in simplicity. It's the case

> of the American Stackpole, and his fine portrait of a little girl modeled in nuances. It's a fresh work filled with a vision of tenerness."

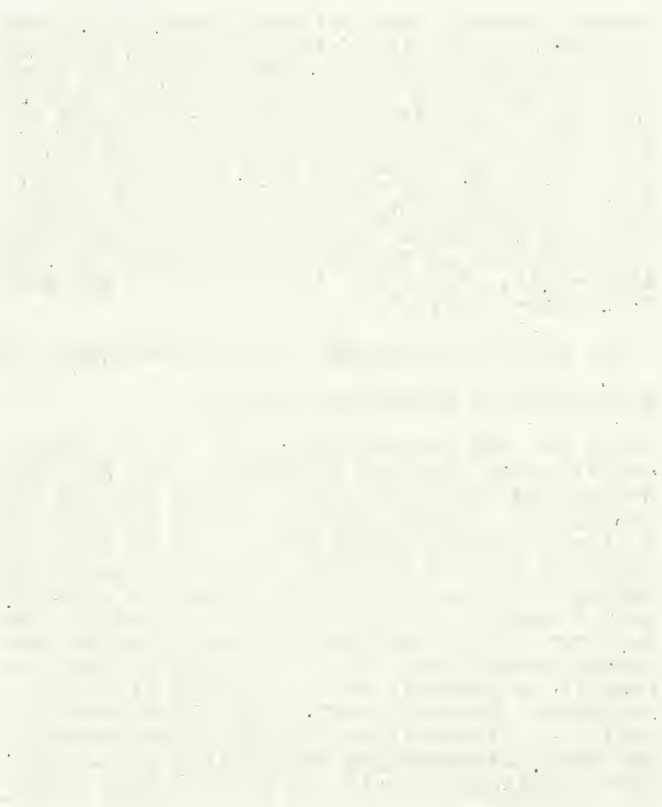
RETURN TO AMERICA--SACRAMENTO WORK

Stackpole, with three years of European art studies and pleased with the knowledge he had gained in painting, prepared to return to America. Harry Noyes Pratt, in the San Francisco Chronicle of August 12, 1923, tells of Stackpole's return:

> "Ralph Stackpole has returned from his sojourn of several years in Paris. He slipped into San Francisco very quietly, without blare of trumpet or welcoming delegation, and was hard at work in his old studio on Montgomery Street before the art colony was really aware of his return. He isn't wasting much time these days. A sculptor who has turned painter as Stackpole has, a sculptor who has two important commissions on his hands besides the routine duties of instructor at the California School of Fine Arts--well, the devil isn't going to get much of a look-in here."

Mr. Pratt, continuing on the same date, tells of further activities of Stackpole in Paris:

> "That is the interesting thing to me, Stackpole's rapid rise as a painter. He had done nothing in oils, you know, before he left San Francisco; except, as he says, to fool around a little with a thumb box. Yet in Paris he has been working steadily in this medium and making a very real place for himself as a painter. Naturally enough, Stackpole turns to portraiture in his painting and has produced some conspicuously good work. Not that he confines himself to portrait work. During his travels in Europe he made a multitude of water-color sketches, impressions of color and movement, and these--fragmentary though they are--constitute unmistakable evidence of the talent Stack-



pole possesses. It is his intention to give a showing of his work a little later on. It will be an exhibition worth seeing.

TWO FOUNTAINS FOR SACRAMENTO

"I spoke of two important commissions he has on hand. These are both for the city of Sacramento, and both, as it happens, are fountains. One of these has been hanging fire for a number of years, the Florence A. Coleman bequest to the city of Sacramento of $30,000 for a 'fountain for birds and thirsty animals,' in memory of William P. Coleman. The fountain is to stand when completed in the city's beautiful plaza directly facing the City Hall. The other commission is a fountain to stand in the William Land Park--itself a memorial--as a memorial to the late Charles Swanston. A fund of $10,000 has been set aside for this purpose. Stackpole's designs have not been completed for the fountains and will not be for some weeks to come. Sacramento may be sure, however, that in these memorials she will have art of real worth."

A description of these fountains is embodied in an article in the Sacramento Union of April 12, 1925:

"Ralph Stackpole is at work on two large monuments for parks in Sacramento. And in between times, he is painting in oil and water-color, modeling in clay and cutting from stone, making wood block prints, and pencil sketches and feeding the studio cat with four kittens. Life is full of these things for the artist who is not occupying his time waiting for an inspiration.

THE COLEMAN FOUNTAIN

"Since horses no longer roam in city parks, the artist had to provide drinking places for dogs and birds only.

"A hexagonal basin, some fifteen feet across, with the water surface at the ground level, provides for the dogs. From the center of this basin rises the base of the monument. On each panel of this base is an animal head, bear, mountain lion, coyote and so on--from each of which water pours into a basin. From this rises

a three-sided shaft with three female figures draped in flowing garments and symbolical of the Sacramento, Feather and American Rivers. These figures support a bird fountain--a circular basin--from the center of which rises luxuriant vegetation in conventional design.

"Stackpole is at work on the plaster model which will be put together in a few days in his studio yard in Montgomery Street. He had to construct a special crane for the purpose of putting together the various pieces of the monuments.

THE SWANSTON FOUNTAIN

"The other monument, the James Swanston Memorial Fountain, will be placed in the new William Land Park. Swanston was a pioneer cattle man. His statue, which is being cut from sand stone, shows the cattleman seated at ease on a rock overlooking his vast acres. On the stone panels for the base of the statue are cattle carved in relief."

PACIFIC COAST PIONEER "DIRECT CUT"

Before proceeding with other important works by Stackpole it should be mentioned that among his technical studies of sculpture while in France, he learned the "direct cut" method. This technique he used in the execution of the Sacramento fountains. To the layman this term may be vague, and to clarify any misconception it should be explained by the artist. In an article published in the San Francisco Art Association Bulletin, Stackpole wrote:

"There are a few places dotted over the globe where sculpture has flourished. You can count them on your fingers. In Asia Minor, the old Hittites, and then the Assyrians did great work. In Egypt and in Greece, around to India and China and Java, then over to Mexico and up to British Columbia, where the Columbian Indians

make totem poles, masks, etc., and back to Africa where Negro art grew as fine as any.

"Most of us have seen actual work or reproductions of work from these great periods and places, and it doesn't take a great amount of intelligence to form some idea or standard of what is best and highest in the sculptor's art. In all these places sculptors assisted the religions, recorded history and made utensils for every-day use. With the advent of science most of these things are made by machine, stamped out in series, and the sculptor's art was swamped and dragged down to a very low level. Imitation of work already done, copy and recopy, and the whole art soon lost its vitality.

"In the last few years, following the fashion to probe, investigate and examine, the case of sculpture and her malady is solved. The cure is, start with a block of stone or a slab of wood and do it direct. There is all the evidence in the world that 'the old boys' who worked in the great periods, worked in that way. Let anyone who thinks he knows anything of sculpture try it. In a few hours he will know much of the A. B. & C. of sculpture he possesses, how much alphabet, how much language.

"If our society, with its high standards of living, wants something said about it, something recorded in the noblest way man has ever developed, several of our own sculptors could do the task, and the language they have been working on these ten or twelve years would blossom out.

"It is no secret that the imitation goddesses, Greek, Italian Renaissance, French Renaissance, for United States public buildings, have been done by members of the National Sculpture Society. They are modeled in clay, and turned over to stone carvers to reproduce in stone, the sculptors not knowing much about stone, and the stone carvers not much about sculpture.

STACKPOLE VISUALIZES A CONTEST

"Sometime I should like to see this sort of competition: Let one of the cut-direct boys

> here in the West challenge one of the big goddess-modeling boys of the East. Give them each a block of stone and hammer and chisels; call them to the center of the ring, whisper something about low punches, and say 'Go to it.' The man from the East would say before the match was made: 'This is not my game, I'm not trained.' But--it is the game of sculpture.
>
> "I am sure there are many out here itching for such a contest, more than that, they are itching for some sensible building to decorate with great reliefs telling about the people around us, how they live and hope and die, and--a sensible city plan where great monuments would accent stages in her growth."

Stackpole's enlightened article was followed by a critic's estimation of the direct cut method. In the article under the heading "A Sculptor Among Makers of Stone," Jehanne Bietry Salinger in the Argus of April 1929, wrote:

> "By all of the progressive artists, laymen, and critics on the Pacific Coast, the name of Ralph Stackpole has come to be associated with sculpture in its most virile form, the cut direct method--as distinguished from clay modeling and cast work and from machine cut 'statuary.'
>
> "Stackpole himself did not have such firm convictions at the start of his career. But because of his simple, robust and unequivocal mind and character, he recognized and accepted cut direct sculpture as a true artistic expression when he first encountered it."

Stackpole's inclusion of the direct-cut method in the Sacramento Plaza work, leads Mrs. Salinger to evaluate that work:

> "Massive and architectural in its design, the fountain is not an 'obvious work of art,' created to please popular taste. It does not shout at one as though to say: 'Look at me, I am here to prove that there are artists and art patrons

> in California.' But one comes upon it, towering among the luscious overhanging green of many trees, a spectacle so thrillingly simple that it is an integral part of its setting. One can no more imagine finding it elsewhere than one can visualize the Plaza without it.
>
> "Three female figures hold a wide basin above their heads. They have the build of women of the soil. There is no sophistication in the design of their limbs, their breasts or their hips. They are elemental, as purely expressive of life, as is the water which flows so softly over them. Throughout the hot summer afternoons people sit dreaming on the benches of the Plaza Park without, perhaps, ever regarding Stackpole's fountain with any sort of art consciousness.
>
> "Stackpole never cuts into stone without a definite knowledge of the place to be occupied by the finished work, for he must first conceive the appropriateness of what he is to create. A whole theory of art could be evolved from this artist's method of working, yet no sculptor of his importance has fewer theories about art than he. In fact he dislikes the very word 'art' and is absolutely inarticulate when it is applied to his own work."

Some two years of Stackpole's effort were spent in the completion of the Sacramento fountain.

MISCELLANEOUS WORK--VERSATILITY--MATISSE

In returning to the chronological arrangement of Stackpole's career, something is learned of how he spent his leisure while executing the Sacramento commission. Ada Hanafin, in her report to the Wasp, May 3, 1924 of the 47th annual exhibit of the San Francisco Art Association, wrote:

> "A versatile being and a sincere artist is Ralph Stackpole. So good are his contributions

> that it is difficult to make a choice. Especially interesting is his panel cut in a stone of a reclining semi-archaic figure, not too rigid, which evokes at once a sense of strength and directness and latent grace, a bit of the past fused in the spirit of the present. Strong telling lines, so characteristically his, give to his figures done in pencil a life-like sense of form and solidity."

And the Wasp of December 20, 1924, of Stackpole's industry and versatility continued:

> "Whether Stackpole paints in oils, draws in pencil, sketches in pen and ink or models in clay, one purpose unfailing guides him--sincerity. Although he handles each medium with equal skill and facility, he is primarily and essentially a sculptor.
>
> "One noble quality dominates his work--strength, but not the brute force one associates with Putnam's sculptures, rather a force obviously controlled--a strength tempered by refinement and grace. One discovers in his busts something more than likeness of subject. He glimpses the Inner-Man, and reveals his hidden strength whether it be mental, physical, or spiritual. One of his newest models is a bust of the noted artist, Arthur Mathews. Through a contemplative mood he has reflected the force of the man--his powerful mind, far-sightedness and physical strength.
>
> "In 'Reclining Nude,' one of his latest paintings, simplicity of line and color have harmoniously united to suggest life through the form of a woman in a moment of relaxation. His telling lines and subtle flesh tones, give to the figure a substance and solidity that bespeak of bone and muscle beneath the surface."

Stackpole's rise to prominence in art circles has not always been accompanied with calm sailing. The past two articles from the Wasp have stressed Stackpole's sincerity. Strengthened by the pioneer hardships encountered in his formative years, it is doubtful if he could have expressed him-

self otherwise. Through the expression of what he believed to be the truthful representation of a nude female, was precipitated a controversy in local art circles. Of this furore the Wasp of May 9, 1925, said:

> "There has been much ado over the recent exhibition of three paintings of nude figures at the Palace of the Legion of Honor. The Park Commissioners ordered their removal, and the San Francisco Art Association vigorously protested against this action, contending that the Association through its collection and hanging committee of eminent artists approved and authorized the installation and that they should be allowed to exercise their own judgment in the matter; on the other hand the Park Commissioners report certain objections on the part of some visitors to the exhibit, and claim authority to exclude the paintings. These works of art are by Ralph Stackpole, Arthur Dursten, and Edward Hagedorn."

Grace Hubbard in the Wasp of December 19, 1925, gave an interesting comparison of the work of pupil and teacher and spoke further of Stackpole's versatility:

> "In Stackpole, we find another type--almost the antithesis of Piazzoni. His colors are often harsh where Piazzoni's are delicate--the power of his canvases is forced on you, whether you will or no.
>
> "In his enthusiasm he works in many media; one day he may be found painting in oils, so intensely absorbed that it is hard to believe he could ever turn to anything else for expression. Again he revels in wet clay. He constructs a portrait bust, a study of a fountain, or a figure to be cast in bronze, with the dexterity of a man, brief, spontaneous and gay.
>
> "It is amazing to watch him draw. In three, five, or at the outside, ten minutes, the swift, sure lines arrange themselves into a woman with muscles and bones. The difficult foreshortening

of the convincing anatomy is achieved apparently without effort.

"But the merit of Stackpole's work lies not in his skill in portraying things photographically. He was born with that knack, and to him--as to all moderns, the pictorial fidelity is not paramount.

"In his self-portrait which was awarded the gold medal over all other contestants last April in the Spring Salon, held in the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, we find that he has forsaken reality fearlessly to satisfy some inner need. The portrait has an undeniable character which he could not have gained in the academic manner. He has painted not only his face, but himself, and whether one is en rapport with this type of work or not, they will be forced to admit that it has unusual power."

Stackpole spent his vacation during the winter of 1926 in Mexico. While there he studied the work of Diego Rivera and Orozco, the great fresco mural painters, and became friends with them.

By his sincere nature, Stackpole also gained the friendship of art leaders when in Europe. Those friendships have lasted through the years. Henri Matisse, post-impressionist, when passing through San Francisco en route to Tahiti in April of 1926, visited with Stackpole. The highlight of his visit was a studio dinner given in his honor by Stackpole and attended by leaders of the local art colony.

WOLFSOHN MEMORIAL AND MEXICO

In the early part of 1927, Stackpole received a commission for the Rachel Wolfsohn Memorial Fountain to be placed

in the Girls' Club at 362 Capp Street, San Francisco, California. As much of Stackpole's work was now in heavy stone, he found it necessary to move his top floor studio, at 716 Montgomery Street, to the firm ground of his stone yard just back of it. On the completion of the Wolfsohn Memorial the San Francisco Examiner of January 27, 1929, said:

> "Stackpole has turned out a most colorful and gracious piece of work.
>
> "Presented under the form of a two-panel bas-relief standing in the middle of the basin, this fountain shows on one side, two girls seated and arranging flowers. The genuine simplicity of the composition and the true girlish fashion in which the two maidens are portrayed make this piece an achievement in cut direct which lacks neither grace nor refinement of design, contrary to what the opponents of this technique proclaim. The other side of the stone is as graceful and finished and depicts Rachel Wolfsohn, the founder of the club, greeting a young woman with a small child. The spirit of so-called old fashioned good grace, which is the predominant characteristic of this charitable organization, has been caught by the sculptor without doing a publicity stunt in the contemporary style of over-laudation. Simple, direct, as direct as the medium in which Stackpole works, this bas-relief fountain has been finished in color, the artist using the technique of encaustic painting to give more life to the figures cut in stone. And the colors have given charm to it."

In 1928 news was received by the local art colony from Santa Rosa, California, that Stackpole had married Francine M.C. Mazen of Fairfax, California, a member of the local art colony. The couple were attended at the ceremony by Gottardo Piazzoni and Helen A. Salz and later spent a few months in Mexico. While there Stackpole strengthened the friendship with Diego Rivera begun in 1926.

Stackpole, having observed a dearth of frescoes in California, on his return to San Francisco, prevailed upon William L. Gerstle, a former president of the San Francisco Art Association, to commission Diego Rivera to execute murals for the new California School of Fine Arts, located in San Francisco. To have additional work from the great Mexican artist Stackpole influenced Timothy L. Pflueger, of the architectural firm of Miller and Pflueger, to commission Rivera to do murals for the San Francisco Stock Exchange. Both commissions were sent to Rivera, and while he was in San Francisco Rivera resided in Stackpole's studio. This action of Stackpole's resulted in considerable local controversy, most of this controversy centering about Rivera's political beliefs.

An idea of Stackpole's friendship and loyalty to the artistic greatness of Rivera, is found in his reply to the Argus of January 1929, when Rivera's subject matter was questioned. The editorial of the Argus is quoted first:

> "Ralph Stackpole, the artist and sculptor, is an outstanding figure in San Francisco's art activities. He was one of the friends of the Argus at the time of its inception, and has remained one of its staunch supporters throughout its existence. He was also among California's earliest admirers of Rivera and has been untiring in his efforts to bring the Mexican artist to San Francisco. In an open letter to the Argus, Mr. Stackpole questions our 'anti-Rivera activities.' As we value his opinion, both as an artist and as an individual, we are glad to reprint here his letter."

The following is Stackpole's letter of December 14, 1928:

"What's the big idea and why the anti-Rivera activities? Your first article, 'The Tragedy of Rivera,' could have been a mistake by a new eidtor trying to make his magazine interesting or sensational, but the five big reproductions on the front page of Rivera's 'Burial of the Workman' were so beautiful and universal that, in many instances that I know of, the stupidity of the article was quite forgotten and the front page pinned upon the wall.

"The editorial in the last issue is more harmful. It is an attack upon a man's politics, which should be outside the scope of an art magazine. Did not the Democrats before the election denounce the Republicans as tyrants, robbers and traitors? This is political stock stuff to influence ignorant people and is not taken seriously by any intelligent person.

"So what has Rivera's politics to do with his art?

"Rivera is, in my opinion, one of the finest artists of today. In several of the state buildings in Mexico City, and also in the Agricultural College at Chapingo, are hundreds of yards of his mural decorations. This work has been going on for over six years. I was so impressed with my first visit that I thought that if we could only get real fresco decorations started in San Francisco, it would add color and life to the grayness of our buildings. I thought if Rivera could only start it here, as he did there, it might be like lighting a match to something we may have in us, and that the thing would develop and grow. That hope was perhaps over-enthusiastic.

THE BACCHANTE BY JOSEPH BERNARD

"A few years ago the artists of San Francisco bought the Bacchante by Bernard, for exactly the same reason. There was a big kick as usual; the Old Guard threw up their hands and said they did not understand. But the Bacchante is here, and is enjoyed by a great many, especially of

> the younger generation. The decoration by Rivera is not here yet and the Argus is not helping him to come. In all probability, Rivera would leave us something beautiful. If he does not come, we shall have lost a sample of a great artist's work. Mexico City, in a poor country, is already one of the richest in modern mural decorations. We, in a rich country, have practically nothing.
>
> "The Argus expresses some disquietude as to Rivera's subject matter. It will probably be this: On the north wall of the School he will paint a beautiful Goddess symbolizing California, working in her garden, tenderly caring for her young flowers; but she is pained and anxious because blind footsteps have pressed some back into earth."

To dispel any doubt of Stackpole's victory, it should be added that Rivera's works are now on both the walls of the Art School and of the Stock Exchange.

SAN FRANCISCO STOCK EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Again it would be superfluous to detail the numerous works and exhibits by Stackpole during the remainder of 1928 and 1929. Early in 1929 he was commissioned to execute several subjects for the San Francisco Stock Exchange. Most of the periodicals and newspapers referred to the Stock Exchange commissions as Stackpole's surpassing achievement and considerable space was devoted to them. Of the Sansome Street entrance, Junius Cravens in the Argonaut of January 18, 1930, wrote:

> "As one studies Stackpole's fine decorative sculpture group, 'Progress,' which overhangs the east entrance to the office building, one finds in it a symbol, whether employed consciously or not, of the aforesaid future. A huge nude

male figure, in high relief, dominates the group, his outstretched hands resting upon the arc of a rainbow. Above the rainbow, to the right and left, are stylized suggestions of rain and lightning, symbolizing water and electric power. Beneath it, and flanking the main figure, are two smaller male figures in low relief which represent progressive labor. The group as a whole is beautifully balanced in design, and is executed with mastery.

"Stackpole has also done three medallions in low relief on the parapet of the old wing of the building. The one on the east front is the most interesting of the three, though it is not necessarily the best in design. It is a male subject which suggests motive power. The two medallions which are on the north front are female subjects, and appear to suggest commercial development."

Of the chef d'oeuvre of Stackpole's Stock Exchange commissions the Art Digest of August 1, 1931, reported:

"Ralph Stackpole, San Francisco sculptor, will soon begin carving of the pair of 21 ft. statues he has modelled for the pylon corners of the Stock Exchange Building, which will stand on 6 ft. bases, thus bringing them to a height of 27 ft. from the sidewalk level. The models recently shown to critics are as monumental in conception as the finished work will be massive in bulk, and have been praised for their strength and modernity. One symbolizes 'Mother Earth,' and represents 'The Spirit of Earth's Products, with accompanying figures of contemplative and instinctive Wisdom.' The other is 'Man and his Inventions,' and represents 'The Genius of Invention, with figure symbolizing Physics and Chemistry.'

"The material used will be granite from Knowles, California. Approximately 257 tons, the smallest 30 tons. Each of the pieces will require a flat car of the largest size for their transportation; after some preliminary carving by the sculptor and his assistants at the quarry, the actual carving will begin after they are placed in shaft form at the corners of the building. Stackpole will chisel the groups from plaster casts."

Of Stackpole's contributions to the interior of the Stock Exchange Lunch Club Room, the Architect and Engineer of December 1931, wrote:

> "Stackpole's panels are on the walls flanking the fresco, and represent 'Indoors' and 'Out,' the former by a pair resting and enjoying the radio, the latter a cowboy typifying the great open spaces of the West."

At this point it seems desirable for future reference to throw light upon the time and patience necessary to complete such monumental work. Sculpture is hard work, and to dispel any idea of its being a sinecure, the San Francisco News of July 23, 1932 tells of the work involved:

> "If you cherish conceptions of jauntily smocked sculptors, applying the chisel in cheery studios when--and only when--the spirit moves them stroll down to the corner of Pine and Sansome Streets some morning at 6:30.
>
> "Squint through the crude board structure on either side of the Pine Street entrance, behind which Ralph Stackpole is hewing out the two massive granite monuments.
>
> "You probably won't recognize the dean of San Francisco's sculptors in the dusty denim-clad figure in mask and goggles, and topped by a hat of doubtful vintage.
>
> "There are no hair-tossing preliminaries before Stackpole begins the day's work.
>
> "'You don't feel like getting temperamental when you work on a scaffold 40 feet above ground,' Stackpole commented.
>
> "A rusty iron stove with stacks of kindling beside it testifies to the morning chill that penetrates the chinks of the make-shift studio.
>
> "Eight solid hours a day for nine months now, the artist has been wresting forms out of the unrelenting rock.

> "R. Bona, and M. V. Simich are Stackpole's helpers. Their task is 'pointing' out the proportions with ruler and compass and wielding the pneumatic drills. Stackpole, agile and surefooted, leaps from plank to plank, directing, chiseling, correcting, jealous of every detail, yet never losing sight of the entirety.
>
> "'There's only one way of handling granite,' he says,' and there's nothing sweet or pretty about it.'"

When San Francisco assisted in ushering out the old year (1932), and welcoming the new (1933), the pylons of the Stock Exchange were unveiled with appropriate ceremonies, and a dance in the street, attended by artists and patrons fortunate enough to be invited.

COIT MEMORIAL FRESCOES--NEW DUTIES

Stackpole's efforts in bringing Rivera to San Francisco helped pave the way for many mural projects. Government recognition of the artists in its C.W.A.* plan developed far-reaching results upon national and local art. Artists, before the advent of the government's experiments, were considered a luxury, and were dependent upon the patronage of wealthy people. The government classified them as skilled craftsmen and appropriated money for them to execute murals for the education and enjoyment of the people at craftsmen's wages.

The first C.W.A. art work project in San Francisco was the decoration of the Coit Memorial Tower on Telegraph Hill. "The American Scene" done in frescoes was the subject

*Civic Works Administration

chosen. Stackpole's contribution was "Major Industries of California," including the industries of oil, chemicals, steel, sugar, and canning.

Stackpole, during the years of 1933-34-35, maintained a continuous output of work. His lectures, teaching and numerous exhibits went on in addition to the mural work done by him in San Francisco.

Of Stackpole's next mural work, the San Francisco Call-Bulletin of June 20, 1936, said:

> "Practically complete, ready for unveiling, are new frescoes at the George Washington High School, Thirty-second Avenue and Anza Street.
>
> "Stackpole, famed San Francisco sculptor, completed the fresco on the west wall of the library, interpreting contemporary education in the American high schools."

Then followed Stackpole's work on the Anne Bremer Memorial in the library of the California School of Fine Arts. His subjects were for two lunettes entitled "Sculpture and Architecture."

The San Francisco Call-Bulletin of September 19, 1936 published this article of another honor and duty of Stackpole's:

> "Ralph Stackpole, able San Francisco sculptor, today has joined the staff of instructors at Mills College, teaching sculpture.
>
> "Stackpole has been instructor in sculpture at the California School of Fine Arts and helped to develop many of the young sculptors in the Bay Region."

Stackpole as a teacher has had singular success with his pupils. Many have worked in his yard at 27 Hotaling Place, and helped carry out his varied commissions. In this manner he revives the old apprentice system.

LATEST COMMISSION--CONCLUSION

Stackpole's most recent commission is one from the government. It is for a stone relief of John Wesley Powell, to be placed in the auditorium of the New Department of Interior Building at Washington, D.C.. Powell explored the Colorado River, and according to his biographers, laid the foundation for the great work that has since been performed by the Department of Interior. This latest commission is a far cry from the ambition of the courageous boy who in 1901, entered the Hopkins Institute of Art to emulate Homer Davenport, the newspaper cartoonist.

Stackpole's course through the years has not been without its trials and its hardship. Experience taught him that labor is one of the finest factors in the development of man. That conception he emblazoned on the gateway to the Varied Industries Building of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Though in a different form, the same theme appears in his "Man and His Inventions" at the Stock Exchange Building.

In his modernistic San Francisco hilltop home he looks out upon his cherished city, and dreams of beautify-

ing her with monumental sculpture. He is well aware of the changes going on in the city below, and in the world; changes he sensed in the early '20's, of that restlessness which was disturbing the world of art. Stackpole's vision and discernment place him in the vanguard of progressive movements.

RALPH STACKPOLE

REPRESENTATIVE

WORKS

PORTRAIT BUSTS AND HEADS:

Rosalie Heynemann	(Marble)	February 1909
Lloyd Heynemann	(Bronze)	March 1909
Nellie Barrett	(Bronze)	April 1909
Signora Garbini	(Marble)	October 1909
Bacchante	(Marble)	November 1909
Leon Sloss, Jr.	(Bronze)	January 1910
Margaret Sloss	(Bronze)	February 1910
David	(Plaster)	May 1911
Professor Hilgard, University of California	(Bronze)	June 1912
Gottardo Piazzoni	(Plaster)	July 1912
Professor Charles F. Holder, University of California	(Bronze)	October 1912
Xavier Martinez	(Plaster)	December 1913
William Green Harrison	(Plaster)	June 1913
Leopold Godowsky	(Plaster)	December 1918
Mrs. Arthur Frank	(Plaster)	June 1922
Arthur Mathews	(Stone)	December 1924
Hudson Poole	(Green Bronze)	January 1926
George Sterling	(Stone)	May 1930
Head	(Black Granite)	May 1930

GROUP SCULPTURE:

Mrs. Max Sloss and three children	(Bronze)	April 1910
The Mourners	(Clay)	April 1913
Fleishhacker children	(Marble)	January 1918

SMALL STATUES:

The Puma	(Stone)	January 1906
Young Deer	(Plaster)	June 1907
Edith Altchal	(Bronze)	May 1911
Kneeling Woman	(Bronze)	July 1918
Nymph	(Marble)	January 1921
Girl in Pajamas	(Stone)	March 1935

MAUSOLEUMS:

Baumgartner, "Angel" (Marble) July 1911
Daniel Murphy, "Madonna and Angels"
(Marble) June 1921

BUILDING SCULPTURE:

San Francisco, California
Masonic Temple "Figures" (Stone) February 1912
Panama-Pacific International Exposition 1915
Gate of Varied Industries Building:
Figures of Tympanum
Man With Pick
Laborers
Rotunda Fine Arts Building:
Worship
Educational Building:
Thought
Girls' Club Memorial Fountain (Marble) January 1929
Stock Exchange Building, 1929-33
Pine Street Pylons:
Mother Earth
Man and His Inventions
Sansome Street Entrance:
Progress
Lunch Club Room, carved mantle,
"Indoors" and "Out"

Oakland, California
Temple Sinai, Abraham Jonas (Bronze Bas-Relief)
October 1920

Los Gatos, California
Patio of Home, Colonel C.E.S. Wood (Stone)
(In conjunction with Ray Boynton) August 1927

Sacramento, California
Sacramento Bee Radio Station (Sculptural Relief)
(Stone) 1936

Washington, D. C.
*New Department of Interior Building
John Wesley Powell (Stone Relief) 1937

*In the process of completion

PUBLIC FOUNTAINS:

Sacramento, California
William P. Coleman (Stone) 1924
In the City Hall Plaza.
Charles Swanston, 1925
In the William Land Park

MURALS:

San Francisco, California
Coit Memorial Tower
"California's Major Industries" 1933
George Washington High School
"Contemporary Education" 1936
California School of Fine Arts 1936
Anne Bremer Memorial Library,
Two Lunettes "Sculpture and Architecture"

OIL PAINTINGS:

Giovanna	April	1922
Reclining Nude	December	1924
Self Portrait	April	1925
Green Eye Shade, The	February	
Hudson Poole	March	1928
Adrian	February	1929

DRAWINGS:

Mexican Mother and Child	January	1928
Head of Child	January	1928

Numerous Etchings--Wood Blocks--Water Colors--Crayon--Charcoal--Sanguine--Pencil and Ink Drawings.

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:

San Francisco, California
Rinaldo Cuneo Collection
Portrait Bust Signora Garbini (Marble) 1909
Leon Sloss Collection
Head of Leon Sloss, Jr. (Bronze) 1910
Max C. Sloss Collection
Group of Sloss Children (Bronze) 1910
Encampment (Fresco) 1935
Gottardo Piazzoni Collection
Portrait Bust of Romy (Marble) 1912

Oakland, California
Doctor W. S. Porter Collection
Kneeling Figure (Bronze) 1918
(Purchased in 1919)

Pasadena, California
Colonel Poole Collection
Portrait Bust Hudson Poole (Green Bronze) 1926
Portrait " " " (Oil) 1928

New York City
Governor Lehmann Collection
Portrait Bust Edith Altchal 1911

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Governor Marland Collection
Reclining Nude (Oil) 1924

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS:

San Francisco, California
San Francisco City Hall
Portrait Bust Judge Seawell (Bronze) 1919
San Francisco Museum of Art 1925-35
Portrait (Oil)
Horses and Trees (Pencil)
Nude (Drawing) E. Walter Collection
Nude Standing (Drawing) E. Walter Collection
Two Figures (Ink Drawing) A. Bender Collection
Portrait (Charcoal) A. Bender Collection
Untitled (Water Color) A. Bender Collection
Nude (Drawing) Bender Collection

Berkeley, California
University of California, Hall of Agriculture
Portrait Bust Professor Hilgard (Bronze) 1912

Palo Alto, California
Stanford University
Portrait Bust Professor Flugel (Bronze) 1919

Los Angeles, California
University of Southern California,
Department of Science
Portrait Bust of Professor C. F. Holder 1912
(Bronze)

EXHIBITIONS:

San Francisco, California

San Francisco Art Association Spring Exhibit, 1906
- Puma (Sculpture)
- Man and Horse (Sculpture)

Studio Building December 1908
- Two Portraits (Plaster)

Studio Building May 1909
- Two Portraits (Plaster)

California Conservatory November 1909
- Signora Garbini (Marble Bust)
- Bacchante (Marble Head)

Vickery, Atkins and Torrey January 1910
- Head, Leon Sloss, Jr. (Bronze)

The Sketch Club November 1910
- Relief of Ernest Esberg (Bronze)
- Bust of John Fleming Wilson (Plaster)

Vickery, Atkins and Torrey September 1912
- Head (Bronze)

Hill Tolerton Galleries October 1914
- (California Society of Etchers)
- Adele in White Shawl (Etching)
- Adele (Etching)
- Piazzoni (Etching)
- Study Number Two (Etching)

San Francisco Press Club November 1914
- (For Belgium Relief)
- Head (Bronze)

Panama-Pacific International Exposition 1915
- Head, Leon Sloss, Jr. (Bronze)
- Mrs. Max Sloss, Jr. and Three Children (Bronze)
- Bust, C. F. Holder (Bronze)
- Fleishhacker Children Group (Marble)

Golden Gate Park Museum, 2nd Exhibit 1916
- Romy (Marble Sculpture)

San Francisco Art Association Catalogue June-September 1916
- Mrs. A. (Portrait Statuette) (Bronze)
- Nymph (Marble)
- Bust (Plaster)

San Francisco Art Association Annual, November-December 1916
- Crayon Drawings 1- 2- 3- 4- 5
- Romy (Marble)
- Texas (Unfinished) (Marble)
- Portrait Sketch (Plaster)

San Francisco Art Association, Jury Free
November-February 1918
Worship (Bronze)
Bust, Doctor Flugel (Bronze)
Hill Tolerton Galleries March 1918
Mortimer and Elinore Fleishhacker (Marble)
Kneeling Figure (Bronze)
Drawings (Pencil)
San Francisco Art Association Annual March-May 1918
Bust of Charles A. Warren (Plaster)
Margaret (Marble)
Figure for a Fountain (Plaster)
Crayon Drawings 1- 2- 3
Hill Tolerton Print Rooms August 1918
Etchings
Museum Loan Exchange, San Francisco Art Association
January 1919
Portrait Group - Two Children (Bronze)
Hill Tolerton Print Rooms February 1919
Black and White, Sanguine (Crayon Studies)
San Francisco Art Association March-May 1919
Bust, Leopold Godowsky (Marble)
Reclining Woman (Marble)
St. Francis Hotel
Benefit of Jack London Memorial At Glenn Ellen 1920
Plaster Bust
McCann Company February 1920
Nymph (Marble)
Group of Studies
San Francisco Art Association, Third Jury Free
May-June 1921
Portrait, S. Schehatovich (Plaster)
Portrait, Johnnie Ortega (Plaster)
City of Paris Gallery February 1924
Giovanna (Oil)
Bohemian Club, San Francisco Institute of Architecture
April 1924
Relief over Mantel (Stone)
San Francisco Art Association, Forty Seventh Annual 1924
Panel in Stone
Pencil Drawings
Nude (Oil)
California Palace of the Legion of Honor May 1925
Nude (Drawing)
San Francisco Art Association, Forty Ninth Annual 1926
Relief in Stone
Beaux Arts Gallery (First one-man show) 1926

Beaux Arts Gallery 1928
Mexican Mother and Child (Drawing)
Head of Child (Drawing)
Modern Gallery March 1928
Nude (Drawing)
San Francisco Art Association, Spring Exhibit 1928
Three Drawings
San Francisco Art Association Annual April-May 1929
Portrait of Mrs. B. (Oil)
Woman with Lipstick (Oil)
Three Crayon Drawings
San Francisco Art Association Annual April-May 1930
Held at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor
Head of George Sterling (Stone) Won medal and prize for sculpture.
Relief in Black Granite
Drawings 1- 2- 3
Beaux Arts Gallery June 1930
Water Colors
San Francisco Art Association Annual April-May 1931
Seat for Garden (Granite Sculpture)
Drawings 1- 2- 3
California Palace of the Legion of Honor July 1931
Woman with Lipstick (Oil)
California Palace of the Legion of Honor
(International Sculptors) August 1932
Boxes (Drawing)
Woman with Lipstick (Oil)
Progressive Artists First Annual January 1933
Head (Oil)
Art Center May 1933
Portrait of Woman (Oil)
Adams-Danysh (Second one-man show) January 1934
Charcoal Sketches
Progressive Artists Second Annual October 1934
Pencil Drawings
San Francisco Art Association September 1935
Graphic Arts "Heads" (Drawing)
San Francisco Museum of Art July 1936
Head (Granite Sculpture)

Berkeley, California
Hotel Claremont Gallery, Group of Nine Artists 1926
Adrian (Oil)

Los Angeles, California
Liberty Art Exhibit 1918
Kneeling Woman (Bronze)

Burlingame, California
Studio Shop — June 1931

San Diego, California
California-Pacific International Exposition — 1935
Girl in Pajamas (Stone Sculpture)

New York City
Whitney Warren Architectural Exhibit, May-June 1911
Head of David (Plaster)
Museum of Modern Art--Art of 16 Cities — 1933
Portrait Bust George Sterling (Stone)

Salt Lake City, Utah
The Art Barn — July 1935
Etchings

Paris, France
Salon des Artists Francais — 1907
Statuette of Young Deer (Plaster)
First Salon des Tuileries — 1921
Portrait Bust Mrs. Arthur Frank (Marble)
Crayon Drawings
Salon des Independents — 1923
Giovanna (Oil)

AWARDS:

Whitney Warren Architectural Exhibit, New York 1911
First Prize, $100, for "Head of David" (Plaster)

Panama-Pacific International Exposition 1915
Honorable Mention for "Group of Sloss Children (Bronze)

Liberty Art Exhibition, Los Angeles. 1918
First Prize, $150, for "Kneeling Woman" (Bronze)

San Francisco Art Association Annual Exhibition 1918
Gold Medal for "Crouching Figure" (Plaster)

San Francisco Art Association Annual Exhibition 1920
Gold Medal for "Nymph" (Marble)

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San- 1925
Gold Medal for Self Portrait (Oil) Francisco

Hotel Claremont Gallery, Berkeley, California 1925
Group of Nine Artists Exhibit
First Prize, $50, for "Adrian" (Oil)

San Francisco Art Association Annual Exhibition, 1930
First Prize, $300, for Bust of George Sterling (Stone)

San Francisco Art Association Annual Exhibition, 1935
Graphic Arts Section
First Prize, $50, for Head (Crayon Drawing)

CLUBS:

Member:

San Francisco Art Association	1909
Jury of Awards, San Francisco Art Association	1919-31
The Sketch Club	1910
California Society of Etchers	1913
The Art Center	1928
Family Club	1929
Artists and Writers Union	1934
Sculpture Committee San Francisco Museum of Art	1935

INSTRUCTOR:

California School of Fine Arts	1917
Mills College, Oakland, California	1936

RALPH STACKPOLE

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J O M O R A

1876. . . . . .

Biography and Works

"CERVANTES"

DE YOUNG MUSEUM

JOSEPH JACINTO MORA

"Jo" Mora, sculptor, author and painter, is one of California's adopted sons often referred to as the "versatile Westerner." Certainly Mora's work indicates a free and indomitable spirit. His vigor, attack, and abundant resourcefulness have come from life-long training and from his ingrained habit of studying everything within reach. It was not the artist's intention to achieve variety, but, as a result of his fundamental love of life, Mora acquired what is now a notable versatility in art.

GENEALOGY

Born in Montevido, Uruguay, South America, October 22, 1876, of a Spanish father and a French mother, Mora inherited the fire and intensity of the Spaniard combined with the subtle mind and sophistication of the Frenchman.

Of the family's history and migration to the United States, Mora told his friend, Robert Welles Ritchie, in 1925:

> "....I was born in Montevideo, Uruguay....My father was a Spaniard--Domingo Mora--who had met his bride, a French woman, in South America after he went there to find some freedom from the rigid European forms governing his craft. For he was a sculptor, a mighty good one.
>
> "When Luis, my brother, and I were born, my father saw that there could be no career for his sons in a country where, forty years ago,

revolutions instead of elections were the accustomed practice. So he moved his family to New York.

"I was very much of a youngster when we settled in what is now called down-town New York. I had to go to public school with my Spanish accent and Spanish ways. I remember very well my first day at school when the teacher asked me how to pronounce my name. Since childhood I had been called Jacinto (Hacinto would be the Spanish pronounciation). When I gave that 'Hacinto' all the Irish kids gave a whoop which meant for me a lot of fights after school hours. So I determined right then and there to forget that Hacinto and become Jo--just plain Jo." *

Domingo Mora and his wife, Lura Gaillard Mora, settled down in New York City where the sculptor established a studio. One-time curator of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes of Montevideo, and creator of many famous sculptures, including "Victima de la Guerra Civil," he was soon started on his way to fame in America.

His wife was his constant companion throughout his entire life time, and there is no question but that great credit reflects upon her for the influence she exerted over three artists: Domingo Mora, her husband, and Luis and Jo, her two sons.

*In all cases in this monograph where asteriks(*) appear, it denotes excerpts from this article, "JOSEPH JACINTO (JO) MORA --A Sculptor Who Found Himself," by Robert Welles Ritchie, in the sports magazine, Game and Gossip, house organ for the Del Monte Hotel, Del Monte, California. The clipping is undated but probably appeared sometime during 1925.

EARLY YEARS

Aside from the problems of adjustment caused by his unfamiliar Spanish name and accent, Jo Mora's childhood was perfectly happy. His home life was rich in opportunity for self-expression and artistic development. Spending much of their time in their father's workshop, Jo and his brother were given lumps of clay and allowed to run the gamut of childish imagination. Treating his sons with the same consideration he would have given any adult, Domingo Mora talked to them of his own sculptural problems and gave them sympathetic criticisms on their youthful efforts at drawing, writing and modeling.

Luis early turned his energies toward painting, a decision amply justified by his present reputation in that field, but Jo was slower in making up his mind. A keen sense of humor and a broad imagination led young Jo to experiment in writing and cartooning before he attempted anything in the way of painting or sculpture. Nevertheless, the latent talent for sculpture was there and, once uncovered, opened up the field in which Mora was to become internationally famous.

An excerpt from the article by Winsor Josselyn in California Arts and Architecture, February 1931, is revealing not only of Jo's artistic bent but also of his early love for the West which was to become his home:

> "....Not yet in their 'teens, the boys did a book of dramatic western romance, as laboriously and lovingly hand-done as by medieval monks, Luis doing the colored illustrations and Jo, two years junior, the script that began in copper-plate nicety and developed into wild scribble as the plot gripped him...."

To the two young artists, the book must have been a great success.

ART SCHOOL AND FIRST JOBS

Luis had already decided that painting was his metier. Jo, on the other hand, probably because his father desired him to become a sculptor, preferred his writing and sketching although he was adept at modeling. His studies at the Art Students' League and Chase's School, New York, and the Cowles Art School, Boston, under J. C. Beckwith, Wm. M. Chase, and J. De Camp, were, consequently, concentrated more on line than on form.

Leaving art school in 1897, he soon found jobs on Boston papers as a sketch artist. Of his first job, Jo later said:

> "That Traveler job was a purely fill-in thing during one of the regular staff's vacations. When he came back I went to the Herald to do general assignments and sport pictures. One of my assignments was to do pictures of notables in the bowling teams. I began to run pictures of strange animals on the bowling alleys --porcupines and rhinoceroses and bears making 'strikes' and 'spares.' The idea made a hit. When Augustin Daly asked me to make him a replica of a picture I had drawn of all my animal bowlers at the wind-up banquet which closed the bowling season, I thought I was a knockout. Sure! I thought there wasn't a cleverer comic animal artist anywhere." *

He left newspaper illustrating work in 1900 to accept a position with Dana, Estes and Company, book publishers, who planned a series of illustrated animal books. For them, Mora wrote and illustrated "The Animals of Aesop," 1901; and "Hurdy Gurdy," 1902. He also illustrated the Animal Football Calendar, 1903, for R. H. Russell, New York.

In 1907, after he had settled down in San Jose, California, his animals took on Western trappings and locale in a weekly syndicated cartoon strip for the Boston Sunday Herald, called "Animaldom." Winsor Josselyn in California Arts and Architecture of February 1931, said of this comic strip:

> "....a broad whimsicality appealing to all ranges of readers. You couldn't look at a page of masked raccoons holding up a stagecoach full of frightened rabbits and moles, while the arch-crook fox leered on from the background, without wanting see more."

THE WEST--HOPI TRIBAL LIFE

All during this period of illustrating, Mora wanted to see the Wild West, and his meeting with Buffalo Bill in Boston, who "seemed a sort of God of Freedom" to Jo--an "incarnation of the life of the wild beyond crowded cities and suburban trains"--added the final incentive. He left his Boston home in 1903 and came to San Jose, California.

He was not alone in his enthusiasm for the West, and he remembered a friend, "Honey" Williams, back in Massachusetts, who was as eager as Jo to learn all about the Indians, the desert, and the mountains of the West. He

persuaded his friend to join him in California, and together, in a spring wagon, rigged out with a water tank, and a span of mules, they started out to see the West. They went first through Baja California, delighting in the historical and spiritual atmosphere of the Spanish missions, and wound up at Sonoma almost a year later. Then they started across the Mojave Desert to New Mexico and arrived at Oraibi during the Hopi snake dance. Mora says:

> "I was completely fascinated by the color of the country, by the symbolism of the Indian snake festival, the primitive quality of the Hopis' lives. I said to 'Honey' Williams, 'Here's the end of the trail for me. I stick right here.' And I did--for three years.
>
> "I lived there as one of them, learned their language, worked with them in the pumpkin fields, hunted with their young men. When they thought they knew me well enough, which was not soon, they made me a member of the tribe." *

This ritual of initiation into the Hopi tribe at Tewa, First Mesa, was one seldom accorded a white man. Mora says of this ceremony:

> "Oh, not as some movie queen or visiting official is made a 'member'--that is a joke with the Indians. No; I went down naked into an underground kiva at the time of the initiation of the young boys of the tribe into the religious mysteries and, like them, I was scourged with the sacred yucca whips--one of the most hair-raising ceremonies imaginable, what with the full display of Katchina masks and body painting." *

He not only became a member of the Hopi tribe, but also was friendly with the Navajo Indians who honored him by giving him the name of Nalghe, "The Hunter." Mora's art,

during this period, was not neglected. Winsor Josselyn, in the California Arts and Architecture of February 1931, writes:

> "Always the saddle-bag equipment of drawing ink, pads, a pencil, watercolors and brushes; among the results was a finely done collection of Katchinas, or Pueblo Indian supernatural masked deities, in color, and today these form perhaps the most complete existing collection. The people of the Southwest, both red and white, with their architecture, customs, animals, means of getting necessities of life--all were grist to the Mora mill."

At this point should be noted a conflicting version of the years after his first jobs on the Boston Traveler and the Herald. Winsor Josselyn, in the California Arts and Architecture of February 1931, says:

> "....that old nursery protest of his, 'I want to be an Indian!' when he had rebelled against starched clothes, finally had its effect and he broke eastern bonds (newspaper work) and went west. Through Texas and old Mexico he roamed, careless as to direction or intention, going by train for the big jumps and then by horse, taking on the life of the country with the cowman and the Indian, living as they lived and making detailed notes in word and line of all he saw and did. This was in the late nineties, and the land was still new. Strong food for a hungry mind, and the mind demanded more. No pullman window trip, but a cruiser's trip. Jo Mora didn't 'go Western' --he was Western."

Then, according to Josselyn, Mora returned to the East where he worked for Dana, Estes and Company, returning in 1903 to California for his trip with 'Honey' Williams, previously mentioned. No mention is made of the 1894 trip in Who's Who in America of 1906-1907, when he was living with

the Hopi Indians, nor in the same publication of 1908-1909, which says he is traveling in the West and illustrating "Animaldom," a weekly syndicated cartoon strip, nor in his story as related to Robert Welles Ritchie. But some credence must be given to Winsor Josselyn's story, for, in the February, 1931 issue of the California Arts and Architecture, Arthur L. Bolton quotes "Jo Mora Speaking":

> "It was in the fall of '94 when I left old San Antonio and struck across the border. A gun and an ambition to ride the range constituted my equipment, in addition to a mustang and a command of Castilian acquired from my father. I was free, young, adventure was everywhere, and the lurking dangers of Mexico were a lure, though I actually knew that behind every mesquite was a Rurale, and behind every Rurale, Porfirio Diaz.
>
> "In the Indian villages I would often squat beside an old squaw and watch her fashion grotesque figures in clay and much to her delight the same clay in my hands would turn to Indians, cowboys, horses. On one of his rambles, Frederick Remington stumbled onto some of these rough studies. He was going over the cattle country, looking for color and took the trouble to look me up. I showed him a number of models that I had at the ranch. 'Son,' he said, 'you're doing fine. Just stay with it.' After he left, I started in real earnest. I took possession of a deserted shack back of the ranch house, and after dispossessing the tarantulas and scorpions, I worked at my clay whenever fortunate enough to have a day or so at headquarters. Cowboys gaped and joked and handed out cryptic bits of valuable criticism. Indians looked on and grunted approval or disapproval,while model after model was destroyed because it did not please me or some of my numerous critics."

With the exception of this conflicting story that Mora had come West first in 1894, all of Mora's biographers agree.

SCULPTURE BEGINS

In 1907, after living with the Indians for three years, Mora, sensing that this constituted a blind alley as regarded his art, felt creatively sterile. He says of this period:

> "After three years I woke up. I knew I was slipping. The life had me. Either I must break away and make something of myself or I would be--an Indian for the rest of my days.
>
> "So I suddenly pulled stakes. I went back to San Jose in California. I married a girl whose picture had been in my heart for several years. And there I was, at thirty, suddenly awakened to the fact that I had not even got a start in life." *

His wife, whom he married on January 6, 1907, was Grace Alma Needham. Of this union, two children were born, Joseph Needham and Grace Patricia.

> "Then," continues Jo Mora, "came my father and mother out from the East to live with me on my ranch in the Santa Clara Valley. My father's reputation as a sculptor was established; my small reputation as a delineator of funny animals was almost forgotten. Dad asked me to whack in with him in the contracts he had; everything would be signed, 'D. and J. J.Mora' on this and that frieze; this decoration for the front of a new club building, that mantel for a rich man's office." *

And so he was finally drawn into his niche. The Moras' work was sought after; the father's death in 1911 left a number of commissions on Jo's hands which he finished and necessarily had to sign "Jo Mora."

From 1911 to 1913 were busy years, and Winsor Josselyn in the California Arts and Architecture of February 1931, gives a vivid description of Jo Mora's output:

> "The Classic, the Byzantine, the Romanesque, the Renaissance--the Western Indian, the cowboy, the pioneer, the Spanish mission. Marble, bronze, wood terra cotta. When a commission came along that he couldn't take on wholeheartedly, he said so; there was plenty else to do.
>
> "Naturally he developed many western subjects because they lay close to his thoughts, and one of his most noteworthy early pieces was a mantel for the 'Borax Smith' office in Oakland, with bison heads as consoles and the lintel, a bas-relief of the twenty-mule team, which had been so dominant in Smith's life.
>
> "The next large work was for the Native Sons Building in San Francisco, its exterior historical panels, portrait medallions, and bear heads in terra cotta, showing that an artist need not be born in the Golden State to share of its inspiration. The late Senator Phelan was active in the Native Sons at the time, and association with Mora led not only to the Senator's securing a garden fountain of bronze nymphs for Montalvo, his country home, but to his sponsoring Mora for membership in the Bohemian Club, as well."

SAN FRANCISCO

In 1913, Jo Mora moved his studio to San Francisco since most of his large commissions necessitated his working in the Bay region. Here Julia Morgan, architect, asked for his co-operation on interior decorations for the Los Angeles Examiner building which she was designing. His work, which adorns the lobby, was done in the Spanish Renaissance manner.

The same year he exhibited many of his Indian and cowboy works, for which he is now famous. Of this exhibit in the galleries of Vickery,Atkins and Torrey,Porter Garnett in the San Francisco Call of February 16, 1913, writes:

> "....It consists of 11 pieces of sculpture which possess, apart from the merit of the workmanship, qualities of freshness and vigor that are most refreshing. The subjects, with two exceptions, are of vanishing phases of American life--cowboy and the Indian. Although others besides Mora have made records in sculpture of these passing phases, his work has an interest of its own. It has the interest of sincerity and enthusiasm. It has the interest of intimacy and unquestionable knowledge. Mora has spent several years on the ranges and among the Hopi and Navajo Indians. He has been a part of the life and he knows it thoroughly. This knowledge is reflected in his work.
>
> "The question of the suitability of cowboys on bucking horses as subjects for culture will immediately arise in the minds of some persons. To these it may be said that here in the West we are too close--in association, if not in fact--to such subjects to view them romantically. We are more likely to judge them in terms of realism, rather than in terms of romance; to regard the artisanship rather than the art. But these vivid impressions of movement and action are full of romance. They express life dramatically and they express it with art. Precision of technique is, in some cases, carried too far, and one sees the passion of art threatened with the chill of virtuosity; but underneath this precision is emotion and essential beauty. One gets a sense of life from these works and it is only to be regretted that the coloring of the casts has a tendency to rob them of some of their life. As compositions, they express life in action, but the life of the surfaces is obscured by the color and will emerge again only in the bronze.
>
> "When the artist's subtle modeling is considered, it becomes apparent how much better his work will appear when it is cast in metal. The

> quality of his surfaces--his technical freedom and feeling--is shown in the figure of an Indian dancer (The Wolf), colored differently from the others.
>
> "'The Embroiderer' is in some ways the best piece shown. The back of the figure is a fine piece of expression modeling, and the hand as it feels for the needle is suggestively rendered in a masterly fashion. The face of the boy (The Bronco Twister) shows what Mora can do when he chooses to depart from his characteristic line of endeavor. The figure of the old Indian in the group called 'The Hairdresser' is another evidence of a fine intelligence guiding the artist's hand."

The San Francisco Chronicle of February 16, 1913, reviews this same exhibit and goes into more details on 'The Hairdresser':

> "....eleven small figures representing some extremely interesting types of Indian tribal life through the regions of Arizona and Mexico. Mora excels in this line....These statuettes are finished in a bronze coloring, very attractive and filled with life and motion. One is of special interest with its significance with old Indian tradition. It is called 'Poo Po Le E Nah' (The Hairdresser). The Indian maid's hair is done as a bud, the married woman wears hers as a blossom and the old woman's hair represents a seed. 'Toh' (Water) is a masterful piece of work, showing an Indian on horseback, poised on the edge of a steep precipice."

While the Chronicle thought "the bronze coloring very attractive and filled with life and motion," Porter Garnett, in the Call, "regretted that the coloring of the casts has a tendency to rob them of some of their life" so much, that in the February 23rd issue of 1913, he continued:

> "I had occasion to say last week that the pieces of sculpture by J. J. Mora, now on exhibition at the galleries of Vickery, Atkins

> and Torrey, were somewhat handicapped by the quality of the color that the artist had applied to his casts. When I first saw them they had not been placed in the gallery. Since they have been installed, however, it becomes necessary to say they are still further handicapped by their setting. The impression one gets upon entering the room is so prejudiced that it cannot but effect the visitor's interest in the work displayed.
>
> "Mora's compositions are for the most part expressive of action, and the room containing them is a place of turbulence from which one's first impulse is to flee screaming. The draperies on the pedestals are of a color that heightens the unfavorable impression, to which every circumstance of arrangement and tone contributes.
>
> "The visitor should take these things into consideration, and close his eyes to everything but the spirit that is expressed in Mora's work through his art and his interesting handling of action and detail."

In this same year, 1913, Mora was represented at an exhibition of the San Francisco Architectural Club, the annual spring exhibition at the San Francisco Institute of Art, and at the Bohemian Club Art Exhibit. And so Jo Mora, who in 1907 lamented that he "had not yet made a start in life," found himself an accepted artist by 1915, serving as a member of the International Jury of Awards, for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.

THE CERVANTES MEMORIAL

In the same year, when two representatives of the Spanish people contemplated presenting to San Francisco a statue commemorating the great Spanish writer, Miguel de

Cervantes Saavedra, Mora was chosen to execute it. He had been raised on the writings of this man and welcomed the opportunity to cast in permanent form, his admiration and appreciation of Cervantes.

> "The result," writes Winsor Josselyn in the California Arts and Architecture of February 1931, "was a bronze group that stands in Golden Gate Park, near the M. H. de Young Museum, with the heroic bust of Cervantes looking down from a pedestal of native rock upon the kneeling figures of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. An affectionate expression of regard for the work of that writer, excellently interpreted, and undoubtedly destined to be one of Mora's lasting pieces. After all, it is through just such response to stimulus, multiplied by deep understanding, that all fine things are made."

The years following the unveiling of Cervantes were busy ones. Not only did he prepare smaller works for exhibition, but he also fulfilled several large commissions during this period, among them a bronze plaque of Archbishop Riordan which is placed in the Knights of Columbus Hall, San Francisco.

THE BRET HARTE PANEL

He designed and cast the main entrance doorway of the Union Wool Building, Boston, in bronze in Spanish Renaissance style, with the other embellishments in stone. Next, for the University of California grounds, he did a bench of native travertine marble; and then, for the Don Lee Building in San Francisco, the heroic pediment group of terra cotta flanked by decorative bears. A heroic, classical group of

the same material was done over the main doorway of the Pacific Mutual Building in Los Angeles.

In 1918 he also did a bronze bas-relief--the Bret-Harte memorial--on an exterior wall of the Bohemian Club, so placed that it gives the passerby leisurely opportunity for inspection. Mora has arranged the composition well with more than a dozen figures, principal characters from Harte's work, in a manner which shows that Mora has an intimate knowledge of early Western days and a whimsicality which enabled him to capture Harte's prevading humor. This work ranks beside the celebrated Cervantes in importance. Anna Cora Winchell in the San Francisco Chronicle of December 15, 1918, writes:

> "A striking piece of sculpture is that by J.J. Mora, who vivifies the characters of Bret Harte in a memorial panel to the famed writer. It has more than art value, though plenty of that; the personalities stand out and one acquainted with that incomparable word painter of the early days must take deep satisfaction in reviewing these sculptural likenesses."

Of the public unveiling of the same work, the Wasp of August 23, 1919, says:

> "No one who was present at the unveiling of the Mora Bret Harte panel need voice that old lament, 'Love of art and literature is lost.' If Bret Harte were there in spirit--as he doubtless was--he must have been pleased to the depth of his being when he looked upon those characters from his works quickened by the magic of J.J. Mora."

THE SERRA SARCOPHAGUS

In 1921, the San Carlos Mission, Carmel, commissioned him to do the Father Junipero Serra sarcophagus. Winsor Josselyn, California Arts and Architecture, February 1931, writes:

> "Nothing could have suited him better. It is done with rare spiritual insight. The bronze Serra lies at full length on a sarcophagus of California travertine marble, hands at prayer, a small bear crouched at his sandalled feet symbolic of California, while Father Crespi stands at his head. Father Lopez kneeling to the right at the door and Father Lasuen at the left. If ever an expression of a devoted student took permanent form, it is in the power and beauty of this splendid memorial."

Came and Gossip carries a photographic reproduction of this work with the sculptor standing beside it, and also says:

> "Into its historical panels and the figures of Padre Serra and his devoted assistants went the whole sum of Jo Mora's dreaming in that time, when, thinning himself leafing, he made the pilgrimage of the trees up from Lower California." *

Mora rightly considers this one of his best works. A wayside shrine on the road in Carmel Woods is another piece to the memory of Serra. It is of carved wood, painted, with oak benches flanking its base.

Jo Mora, the "versatile Westerner," then leapt to the chance to do another type of work, accepting the commission to do a heroic, classified Greek pediment in terra cotta for the Stock Exchange building in San Francisco. The

Doughboy Memorial for Marin County followed. Things pertaining to war, and especially the World War, were not foreign to him, for in 1918 he had served as Commanding Major of Field Artillery, Camp Zachary Taylor, Kentucky.

DIAMOND JUBILEE COIN

The year 1925 saw the issuance of a new fifty-cent piece designed by Mora. Of this, Robert Welles Ritchie, in Game and Gossip, says:

> "....the United States Mint in San Francisco struck off several hundred thousands of half-dollars of a design quite different from the striding Liberty and spread-eagle reverse of our familiar four-bit piece.
>
> "The new coin carries on its obverse a heavy-shouldered California grizzly bear intent on his business of going somewhere; the reverse shows a miner kneeling over his gold pan. Mightily handsome, and calculated to appeal to the state pride of Californians, for the commemoration of whose Diamond Jubilee of statehood, Treasury authorities at Washington sanctioned this special half-dollar issue." *

OTHER WORKS

E. W. Marland, prominent oil man and political figure of Oklahoma, looking about for a sculptor to do a series of historical Oklahoma figures for the park on his estate near Ponca City, chose Jo Mora. Winsor Josselyn in the California Arts and Architecture of February 1931, wrote:

> "The first four of this projected series are already in place, heroic figures of people who gave Oklahoma much of its tradition and color. There is Belle Starr, the woman bandit; the cowboy, who is the late George Miller of the

Miller Brothers 101 Ranch; a Ponca Sioux Indian chief in attitude of Prayer of the Calumet, posed by John Buhl, sub-chief of the Poncas, and one of a squaw of the Ponca tribe.

"Mora went to Oklahoma to do the preliminary work, and used life for guidance; where the subject existed only in picture and print, he put life itself into these."

Another of Mora's works was that of three life-size portrait-figures in bronze of the small daughters of the Byington Fords. These are used as garden fountains in the Ford home at Pebble Beach, California. "It was a question," commented Mora (Winsor Josselyn, California Arts and Architecture; February 1931), "who had the more fun in the making--the children or I."

In 1936, Jo Mora executed a sculpture for the Monterey County Court House in Salinas, California; six bas-reliefs done in recarved travertine marble, six column caps and sixty-two heroic sculptured heads. All the work is on the exterior and subtly underlying it are designs of Indian motif.

Interspersed among these more important works were other sculptural and bas-relief works. Mora executed a Memorial sundial for the Arlington Elementary School, San Jose; eight heroic figures for the Realty Syndicate Building, Los Angeles; architectural sculpture for the Post Office and Court House, Portland, Oregon; and stone sculpture for the home of Earl C. Anthony in Los Angeles.

But he was not limiting himself to sculptural work alone. He participated in art jury service, serving on four important boards; exhibited in more than twenty-four shows; and proved his versatility by painting two murals. The first was in 1935, "Canterbury Tales," for the lobby of the Hotel Canterbury, San Francisco.

Glenn Wessels, in the Argonaut, July 19, 1935, describes it:

> "Over the fireplace is a panel representing Canterbury during medieval times. Other panels illustrate episodes involving sundry notables of Englishmen of this period. Mora has stressed sweet color and maintained a lightness of approach which contrasts with present day mural style."

So authentic was his depiction of old England that one reviewer (Howard Talbot, the Wasp, July 6, 1935) mistakenly said:

> "Romantic murals by Jo Mora, Carmel sculptor and painter now decorate the Hotel Canterbury. The suite depicts the history of Canterbury from the days of Henry II to the era of Henry VIII, and is glowing with knights, squires and ladies in gorgeous costumes. The artist is of English lineage, and is a recognized authority on the customs and costumes of the Middle Ages. The murals which consist of friezes and panels are done in rich color."

The latest mural commission given to Jo Mora is in the restaurant of the Drake-Wiltshire Hotel in San Francisco. The panels are a frieze of animals in human costume, gayly dancing and dining. The colors are keyed in brightest tempo against a gold leaf background. Each animal satirizes a type

of personality and Mora's ability to draw whimsical characters in an amusing pattern is well exemplified. The animal fable motif gives the room its name of "The Fable."

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

A few representative excerpts from critical reviews, selected chronologically, will serve to illustrate the acclaim which was accorded the versatile Jo Mora when he exhibited. The first is from the San Francisco Chronicle of August 16, 1914, the occasion being the production of the Bohemian Club's musical forest drama, "Nee Natama" for which Mora did a sculpture.

> "....the figure attracted the delighted notice of the clubmen and their guests. It was done by one of the youngest of the artist members of the club and in execution as well as in conception it denotes a big talent.
>
> "Jo Mora was the sculptor and his subject was a mounted Indian intended to typify at once the 'Love Indian' and the 'Hate Indian,' the conflict between which abstractions furnished the impulse of Shiels' allegorical drama. The lower part of the savage's face expresses the evil of the 'Hate Indian' by a brutishness at once repellent and admirable. To the eyes the young sculptor has endeavored to indicate something of keener and finer sensibility; while the attitude of the rider and the posture of the animal are regarded by his judges as being excellent with unforced realism."

The San Francisco Chronicle, June 27, 1915, says of one of his exhibits of small animal sculptures:

> "His cleverness in depicting the Indian tribes in their various attitudes and practices, and his modeling of cowboys and mountaineers in all the phases of 'broncho-busting' are well known. To these he has recently added a clever

group of a lesser type of animal life, in which is included statuettes of small creatures such as rabbits, turtles, dogs and fledglings.

"The real interest attached to these modest emblems of the sculptor's art lies in Mora's power of expressiveness. He seems to know each one of its kind intimately--so much so that one looking on feels with the artist in his delineation. The fledgling, still ruffled and semi-chaotic, looks bored and sorry with life; the toad has a wonderfully ugly face and the turtle is absolute in its inanity.

"The dogs are laughable in their queer postures and grimaces, expressing their feelings just as one sees them in every day life. The note of reality is perfect, and Mora has a grasp on realism that is as artistic as when bestowed upon an imaginative or poetic subject. The mechanical work is good, too; but whatever that may be, it is feeling and action which stands out in Mora's sculpture."

Of the bas-relief of Archbishop Riordan, the same article goes on to say:

"....a plaque cast in bronze and hung in the hall of the Knights of Columbus. The head in profile is a true likeness, while the top of the panel bears a narrow border of Biblical figures carved in great refinement. All about the head in very faint relief are angelic forms, whose arrangement and portrayal show the finest instincts of art."

LUIS MORA-PAINTER

Jo's brother, F. Luis Mora, who early in his childhood turned to painting, is now a noted painter and mural designer. In 1920 he donated his painting, "Thine is the Glory," to the United States War Department. Luis Mora was commissioned by Congress to paint a portrait of President

Harding; an appropriation being authorized for this work. In 1928 the portrait was hung in the White House.

Luis Mora served on the faculty board of the National Academy of Design, New York, in 1934, and has won many prizes, among which are: first Hallgaster prize in New York; the Beal prize for water colors; the S. T. Shaw prize, New York; and the Gold Medal, Art Club, Philadelphia. He has many noteworthy murals and interior decorations to his credit, and executed the decorations for the Missouri Building at the St. Louis World's Fair.

THE SCULPTOR TODAY

It is difficult to appraise this artist now for, though past sixty, he does not plan to retire. At present his Pebble Beach studio is not being used, because in the early part of 1937, Mora started on his way around the world, intent on bringing home a new store of art ideas. He has just commenced to live, he says. As Winsor Josselyn, in the California Arts and Architecture of February, 1931, wrote:

> "The fuel in the man burns brightly; the body machinery is strong and willing. The days are short, even with their early breakfast and no lunch and late dinner. Jo Mora is as up-and-at-'em a man as you'll ever meet, and that's why you will continue to ask, 'And he also did this one, you mean to say?'"

With a life-time of study as a background, a deep appreciation and vigorous conception of life, success, for Jo Mora, is a story still only half told.

JO MORA

REPRESENTATIVE

WORKS

SCULPTURE AND BAS-RELIEF:

Archbishop Riordan Memorial, 1915
  Knights of Columbus Hall, San Francisco
Architectural Sculpture for Post Office and Court House
  Portland, Oregon
Architectural Sculpture for Examiner Building Lobby
  Los Angeles, California
Bench, University of California
  Berkeley, California
Bret Harte Memorial, 1918
  Bohemian Club, San Francisco
Bronco Twister, The
Cervantes Monument, 1915
  Golden Gate Park, San Francisco
Chochonee
Cinch Binder, The
Colored Map of Monterey County
Doughboy Memorial
  San Rafael, California
Egyptian Fantasie
Eight Heroic Figures
  Realty Syndicate Building, Los Angeles, California
Embroiderer, The
Federal Fifty-cent Pieces for California Diamond Jubilee, 1925
Four Heroic Bronzes
  E. W. Marland, Ponca City, Oklahoma
Garden Fountain, Senator Phelan, Montalvo, California
Hairdresser, The
Heroic Figures
  Scottish Rite Temple, San Jose, California
Historical Panels
  Native Sons Building, San Francisco
Heroic Pediments
  Don Lee Building, San Francisco
  Stock Exchange, San Francisco
Heroic Pediment
  Pacific Mutual Building, Los Angeles, California
Junipero Serra's Sarcophagus, 1921
  San Carlos Mission, Carmel, California

La Gitanita
Mantel for "Borax Smith"
  Oakland, California
Memorial Sundial
  Arlington Elementary School, San Jose, California
Navajo Girl
On the Hurricane Deck
Pals
Patty
Plaque
  Rock Rainbow Bridge
Poppy Nymph, The
Quetskava
Range Mother, The
Saddling a Bronco
Sculpture for Doorway
  Union Wool Building, Boston, Massachusetts
Sculpture for Monterey County Court House, 1936
  Salinas, California
Scratching High
Shoot 'em Along
Snapping Turtle
Stone Sculptural Work
  House of Earl C. Anthony, Los Angeles, California
Three Life-Size Figures
  Mr. and Mrs. Byington Ford, Pebble Beach, California
Toh
Wolf, The

MURALS:

Canterbury Tales, 1935
  Hotel Canterbury Lobby, San Francisco
The Fable Murals, 1936
  Hotel Drake-Wiltshire, Dining Room, San Francisco

ILLUSTRATIONS:

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Anderson's Fairy Tales, 1902)
Laura E. Richard's "Hurdy Gurdy," 1902)
Animaldom (Comic Strip)
  Boston Herald and Syndicate Associations
Animal Football Calendar for 1903
  R. H. Russell, New York

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:

E. W. Marland, Ponca City, Oklahoma
Four Heroic Bronzes
"Borax Smith," Oakland, California
Mantel
Mr. and Mrs. Burlington Ford, Pebble Beach, California
Three Life-Size Figures
Earl C. Anthony, Los Angeles, California
Sculpture Work (Stone)
Mrs. Ethel P. Young, Pebble Beach, California
La Gitanita

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS:

Bohemian Club, San Francisco, California
Bret Harte Memorial
Knight of Columbus Hall, San Francisco, California
Archbishop Riordan Memorial
Post Office and Court House, Portland, Oregon
Architectural Sculpture
Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California
Cervantes Monument
University of California, Berkeley, California
Bench
Realty Syndicate Building, Los Angeles, California
Eight Heroic Figures
Examiner Building, Los Angeles, California
Sculptural Work in Lobby
Don Lee Building, San Francisco, California
Heroic Pediments
Pacific Mutual Building, Los Angeles, California
Heroic Pediments
Stock Exchange, San Francisco, California
Heroic Pediments
Scottish Rite Temple, San Jose, California
Heroic Figures
Native Sons Building, San Francisco, California
Historical Panels
San Carlos Mission, Carmel, California
Junipero Serra's Sarcophagus
Arlington Elementary School, San Jose, California
Memorial Sundial
Union Wool Building, Boston, Massachusetts
Sculpture for Doorway
Monterey County Court House, Salinas, California
Sculpture

EXHIBITIONS:

San Francisco, California
San Francisco Institute of Art
Japanese Figure, 1913
Sculpture, 1914
Vickery, Atkins and Torrey
(One-Man Show), February 1913
Bronco Twister, The (sculpture)
Embroiderer, The (sculpture)
Poo Po Le E Nah (The Hairdresser)
Toh (plaster)
Wolf, The (sculpture)
San Francisco Architectural Club
Represented, March 1913
Bohemian Club
Indian Life, November 1913
Scratching a Twister, 1914
Archbishop Riordan Memorial, November 1915
Grecian Lamp
'Mose' Finnell (Head of Dog)
Poppy Nymph, The
Indian Subjects (metalized copper), December 1916
Represented, December 1917
Bret Harte Memorial (panel), December 1918
Bust of Doughboy, 1920
Egyptian Fantasie
Represented, November 1932
Panama-Pacific International Exposition
Represented, 1915
San Francisco Art Association
(First Exhibition, Golden Gate Park Museum),
April 1915
Navajo Girl (marble)
Quotskava (bronze)
Range Mother, The (bronze)
(Post Exposition Exhibition), May 1916
Poppy Girl (sculpture)
Scratching a Twister (sculpture)
(Second Exhibition, Golden Gate Park Museum), 1916
Pals (sculpture)
Patty "
Poppy Nymph (sculpture)
Archbishop Riordan Memorial, June 1916
Chochonee
Cinch Binder, The
Frog, A
Polo
Range Mother, The
Saddling a Bronco
Shoot 'em Along

Snapping Turtle
Toh (plaster), November 1916
Group Exhibition, Hotel St. Francis
Represented, July 1920
All American Exhibition of Sculpture, California
Palace of the Legion of Honor
Represented, 1929

Salinas, California
Monterey County Fair, October 1931

San Diego, California
California Pacific International Exposition, 1935
Fanning a Twister (bronze sculpture)

JURY SERVICE:

Bohemian Club
Jury of Selection, 1914
Member of Committee in Charge of Hanging Entries, 1917
Panama-Pacific International Exposition
Member of International Jury of Awards for Sculpture, 1915
San Francisco Art Association
Jury of Selection, 1915

CLUBS:

Member:
San Francisco Art Association
San Francisco, California
Bohemian Club, San Francisco, California
National Sculpture Society

JO MORA

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B E N I A M I N O B U F A N O

1898. . . . . .

Biography and Works

"HEAD OF SUN YAT SEN"

PROPERTY OF THE ARTIST

BENIAMINO BUFANO

INTRODUCTION

If controversy is the life blood of art, as has been said, the very pulse beat of California sculpture is located in Beniamino Bufano, who has been the storm center of innumerable artistic issues since his arrival in San Francisco.

Although himself uninterested in publicity, the local newspapers have for years considered his every move good copy. He is not concerned over the fact that he is belabored for having created a remarkable work of art or expressed convictions apparently unconventional, considering these things merely as accidental by-products of his real work; his art itself.

As an exceptionally vigorous artist, his works and behavior are more easily dramatized than evaluated. Consequently, there has resulted much biased reporting, sentimentalized opinion, pious indignation, and pointless eulogy, but very little accurate appraisal of the man's work or reliable biographical data on his life.

His study of the great periods of sculpture proceeded through an analysis of the media associated with each period. He noted that characteristic Greek and Renaissance sculptural forms were derived from marble or other relatively soft stones; Egyptian from granite, basalt, diorite; Chinese from highly developed types of bronze and terra cotta casting. On

the other hand he found that decadent periods were characterized by soft, easily formed materials which lent themselves to facility of representation and easy imitation. He discovered by working in wood, granite and metal, that each medium has a character of its own and that only by studying and working in these different media could the artist achieve forms suited to their various characters.

If his work seems severe, sometimes even impersonal, the reason will be found in the medium he has chosen. In writing of Bufano's work one critic recently said:

> "There are two ways to produce a piece of sculpture. One of them is to make a model first in clay or some other pliable medium and have this cast or have someone else copy this model in the ultimate medium....In the other method, the sculptor makes his works himself, direct in the medium he intended them. This is the hard way and is often, in the case of art, the most fruitful....
>
> "But if a man....wishes to change the ancient shape of a block of granite he must toil, putting forth an effort even greater than the granite's resistance to being changed; he must learn its innermost secrets of crystals, faults, and if he is a true artist, make the new shapes in the granite's own terms. If he carves in wood.... he must learn to love wood so that he can let it speak its own language in his art. And so with metal--to hamper metal into the shapes his mind has created, he must know the science of that metal, how far it can be forced without straining, what forms it can take without losing character. He must have the physical strength and the patience to do these things...."

As you look at Bufano's sculpture, it becomes evident that working direct in the ultimate medium has been a powerful factor in his development, and his insistence upon

this one point has caused or contributed to most of the controversy surrounding him. But he is creating works in imperishable materials, materials that time and erosion cannot destroy, vitreous porcelains, granite and stainless steel; and whether he makes a saint or a frog, his subject merges with great dignity into whichever medium he chooses."

ARRIVAL IN AMERICA

Born in the small village of San Fele, near Rome, on October 14, 1898, Beniamino Bufano was brought to America by his parents, Lucrecia and Canio Bufano, at the age of three. His father, a government official in Rome, was an author. Among the books he wrote was a "Life of Garibaldi," the Italian patriot. Remo Bufano, brother of the sculptor, has a studio in Waverly Place, New York, and is a celebrated creator of marionette-shows, for which he designs the puppets, costumes and scenery

FIRST ART EDUCATION IN NEW YORK

Both the young sons of the Bufano family received their education in New York, not at the public schools, but with a private tutor. It was in New York, too, that young Beniamino received his art education. From childhood he was actively interested in drawing, painting and modeling, and as

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*As a tribute to the artist whom he so greatly admires and who is his personal friend, Mr. Joseph A. Danysh, regional advisor of the Federal Art Project for California, has written the above introduction.

soon as he was old enough, Bufano was entered as a pupil at the Art Students' League. His exceptional talent was soon recognized by his teachers and by art critics. He won prizes and medals for compositions, for drawing and for sculpture. But so indifferent was the young art student to money and awards that one of his medals, it is said, still lies unclaimed at the Art Students' League. Numerous other prizes, for which he cared little, were awarded him at exhibitions in New York and the East.

Among his teachers at the League were James E. Frazer, Herbert Adams and Paul Manship, all celebrated sculptors in whose studios he worked, at times, as assistant. It was while working in Manship's studio, Bufano says, that he designed the buffalo that decorates the nickel five-cent piece, handled by millions of people every day.

The sculptor first received public attention while still in his teens when he won the Whitney $500 first prize for his statuary group, "The Immigrants." Newspaper art critics devoted more space to the sponsor of the exhibit, Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, and her studio, than to the artists represented.

However, the New York Times of November 13, 1915, wrote a more detailed report:

> "The exhibit which won the first prize, the work of Beniamino Bufano, a young sculptor of the east side, bore the inscription, 'I came unto my own, and my own received me not.'

"This prize-winner was one of the most ambitious of the works exhibited, and the artist aspired to represent in it the lot of the immigrants here, as he had seen conditions at first hand during his daily wanderings on the great east side. He had attempted to depict the suffering and misery he believed he saw, and the child borne down by the need to work, instead of uplifted by the right to learn. But there was one figure which represented a great hope in the future, a bit of a boy demanding of the country what he believed to be his rights."

DECORATIVE SCULPTURE FOR 1915 EXPOSITION

Restless and eager to see California, Bufano readily accepted the opportunity to come to San Francisco and work on the sculpture details for the Panama-Pacific Exposition of 1915.

The "Panels of Art," 20 feet high over the Palace of Fine Arts, were executed by Bufano, after he had completed the figure groups for the Court of the Universe on the Arch of Triumph, and other decorative sculpture for the Exposition. Still in his apprenticeship, Bufano worked on a commission from Manship, from designs made by the latter in New York.

The young sculptor was strongly attracted to the cosmopolitan city of San Francisco, so like his native city of Rome set on its seven hills. Bufano has since traveled widely; twice circling the globe, but always, since his first glimpse of the city, has made his home in San Francisco.

For a year Bufano stayed in San Francisco; becoming interested in the arts of the Orient through contact with San Francisco's Chinese quarter. Returning to New York for a

time, working, studying and exhibiting there, Bufano felt the desire to travel. He has made journeys to Paris, to Italy, and spent four years in the Orient, two entire years in China, Cambodia and the Malay countries. These years exerted a profound influence on both Bufano's philosophy of life and on his art.

STUDY OF ORIENTAL POTTERY

In China he studied ancient Chinese glazes and pottery, living among the potters in the great pottery cities. While living in Canton, he stayed with Dr. Sun Yat Sen, and formed an abiding friendship with the Chinese revolutionist and ex-president of the Chinese Republic. From his studies, first at Shak-Kwan, a city of 20,000 people, nearly all of whom are potters, and later on at King-teh-chen, near Peiping, where formerly the Imperial pottery for the Manchu Emperors was made, Bufano brought back the secret of glazes which he uses in his modern terra-cotta sculpture.

He returned from the Orient in 1921 to teach in San Francisco and its environs. In his first lecture to his students as an instructor in sculpture at the California School of Fine Arts, he pointed to the plaster replicas of Greek and Roman statuary which they had been wont to copy under their previous teachers, and told them that since they were 20th century Americans, they might dispense with copying and work directly in the medium and to use their creative ability in-

stead. When refused stone by the school officials, he borrowed a truck and hauled stone from the old Mission High School, then being demolished. As a precautionary measure, Bufano is said to have dropped most of the plaster casts on the floor.

At the same time, Bufano was also an instructor in advanced sculpture at the University of California in Berkeley.

In 1921 Bufano's Oriental collection, gathered during four years' travel in Japan and China, in the interior of Java and Bali, in Cambodia and India, were lost in a disastrous blaze which burned his barn studio in Berkeley. Rich as was this store, even more valued by Bufano were his sketches, drawings and models--all of which were burned.

DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

Although the young sculptor had already won recognition in the East, Bufano was too modern for the San Francisco School of Fine Arts. Engaged as an instructor there, he clashed with the conservative element and was dismissed because of the advanced ideas with which he tried to modernize the traditional methods of the school.

The San Francisco Chronicle of May 17, 1923, said:

> "Spencer Macky, dean of the faculty, admitted that Bufano, who turned upside down traditional methods of the school, had been discharged, but refused to make any statement concerning the cause.

"In the art colony last night there was none who was not convinced that Bufano was dismissed because he was too modern.'

"Yesterday, in his studio in the Fine Arts Palace, the diminutive Italian sculptor said the entire quarrel arose when Randolph, director of the school and the person with whom Bufano differed materially in school matters and his bunch, acted unfairly in the awarding of prizes to students several months ago.

"When the judges came together to choose the work for exhibition, they discriminated between the work of students and professionals, giving the latter the preference. 'It seemed to be the names signed to the pieces of art that determined whether the piece should be shown, rather than the beauty. They try to hold students down; they don't want to exploit them but only themselves. I objected and forced them to allow a great many students pieces to be selected,' Bufano said.

"That seemed to be the starter, although there was friction all the time. Randolph didn't like the way I allowed my students in modeling to use their own individuality. He would turn out each student a little Bufano or a little Randolph. To me, that was not art. No one can copy me, nor can I copy anyone else. I taught my students, numbering about fifty in the various divisions, to express themselves in their art. I didn't have them all follow along like so many sheep, as is the method in vogue in the art school.'

"Bufano also stood out for students' rights in other school matters, he said, and thereupon, the directors split with him. Once, about eight weeks ago in a directors meeting, the fight grew so heated that Bufano told the assemblage that 'they should be out peddling bananas, and not teaching art to the young.' From then on matters went from bad to worse, according to Bufano, until he was notified last week that he had not been reengaged for the coming year."

THE DA VINCI SCHOOL OF ALLIED ARTS

Backed by some enthusiastic art patrons and students Bufano decided to open a school of his own in 1923, which he called the Da Vinci School of Allied Arts. This was opened in the Hawaiian Building, one of the structures left over from the Panama-Pacific Exposition of 1915.

Although artists and students rallied to his support, Bufano was more interested in the educational side of the school than in business methods, so that it did not succeed financially, and was finally abandoned by the sculptor when an attachment was filed on it for debt.

A like tragedy befell the artist in October of 1925, when his valuable collection of statuary and paintings was attached for a debt of only $664, incurred for carpentry work at his art school. "I have no money. I know nothing of business," said Bufano to his friends. "What am I to do? Maybe I can give my creditor a statue but to lose one of my treasures would crush me."

EXHIBITS IN NEW YORK

At the time of the purchase of the "Honeymoon Couple" by the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and Bufano's New York showing, the New York Times of January 4, 1925, wrote of Bufano's exhibit at the Arden Galleries:

> "Most of the work in the present exhibition at the Arden Galleries is in his personal medium of glazed pottery. He has modeled two Chinese heads; one is called the 'Scholar' and the other the 'Philosopher.'

> "Though the models are Chinese, he has generalized, until the sense of race is made subordinate to the nature of the learning of each. The color is dull green-blue, the texture smooth and not too shiny, and the outline form as serene as a Chinese bowl, in spite of the necessarily greater variety.
>
> "'The Scholar' is dry, and the humor lies in the artist's tolerant point of view toward boundless information, but Bufano and his philosopher can smile together. The friends are tied together by a rhythmic arrangement of line and design. His manner, in each case, changes with his subject, without losing style. The subject suggests the manner, and the artist controls both."

The same exhibition is described by the New York Herald Tribune of January 4, 1925:

> "....His work comprises a series of portrait busts, small group themes and a heroic 'Crucifixion'--his outstanding achievement--all done in richly applied colored glazes. He shows in all a visible respect for both the craftsmanship and feeling of ancient Chinese pottery sculpture. But his adaptation of both themes of present-day experience is done with an adroit, personal touch that gives them living qualities.
>
> "The large 'Crucifixion,' which is the most important work of the artist, seems hardly to justify itself. It is quite mechanical and emotionless, though appearing decorative in its wooden frame. Such sculptures find their greatest appeal in their intimacy of design and glaze effects, and in this vein his work takes on a wholly individual and alluring aspect."

"The East Meets the West," says Phyllis Ackerman in the International Studio of February 1925, writing on Bufano's sculpture:

> "A strikingly original contemporary instance of this fusion of the two tastes, is the work of Beniamino Bufano....

"....It is one of his Chinese pieces, that the Metropolitan Museum of Art has just bought, the 'Honeymoon Couple.' They stand together, aloof yet intimate, charming persons, but something more than that, the essence of the high-principled domesticity that Confucius enjoins, and the Chinese poets have, for two thousand years and more, descriptively extolled. They are, moreover, not two persons, but genuinely a group unified by the relations of masses and the flow of draperies. And they are covered with fresh and lustrous glazes that have a moist translucency. The Chinese pieces are fine decoration, and, what is more important, they are truly sculptural decoration; but some of the things Bufano has done since his return are sculpturally more important.

"....the most important thing Bufano has done is a 'Crucifixion,' in two slightly different interpretations. The Christ, a young Christ, is on the Cross. But he is not hung by the cruel spikes. He is suspended almost without weight, rising by his own Spiritual exaltation, that comes not within the compass of earthly things, though he is God's son in the flesh, but is slightly disengaged with a detachment that at once expresses his transcendence of corporeality and also creates the aesthetic isolation from the world of natural things, which is so difficult and important in sculpture.

"Bufano does not depend on his hands alone. He works with his convictions and with his aesthetic principles. He has but recently digested his Orient, and it is still formulating his theories. Thus he is first and persistently a sculptor. And he is remarkably young. With a more complete fusion of his intellect, his technical skill and his emotions, he shows promise of being one of the few enduringly important sculptors that America, if she can claim him, has had."

FIRST SHOW IN SAN FRANCISCO

The first one-man show of the young sculptor's works in San Francisco after his return from the Orient was given at

the City of Paris Galleries in June 1925, and attracted country-wide art interest. Gene Hailey, art critic of the Christian Science Monitor, wrote on January 15, 1925:

> "Bufano's paintings, bronzes, porcelains and drawings are presented in a specially arranged gallery, with a background of Chinese gold, admirably suited to the rich color of his work. The bronzes and porcelains take on the satisfying hues and tints of the oldest Chinese sculpture.
>
> "He wisely follows the Orientals in soundness of construction, simplicity of subject and glorious richness of color. Even his drawings are of deep color tonality, although they are simply searching studies of heads done in sanguine and crayon. His several colossal paintings of figures present another phase, closely allied to the Oriental, yet rendered more in the manner of the early Italian primitives, with conventionalized drapes and forms against flat old gold backgrounds and strong color throughout.
>
> "Bufano's studies have brought him many influences, all of which contribute to his originality of vision. Bufano has not imitated the Orientals so much as he has made them his own, from his sense of true art values. He achieves beauty from his understanding of Oriental symbolism and medieval mysticism, made concrete in sound construction. He is a modernist in his superior understanding of the older arts."

"Bufano's work attracts wide attention" wrote the San Francisco Chronicle of June 14, 1925, giving this account of his exhibition at the City of Paris:

> "....The crucifixion in bronze, which is known as 'The Last of the Christians,' is probably the most important piece in the exhibition. In this there are no distorted muscles nor agonized facial expression. The figure on the cross is calm and resigned, as are the beautiful children along the base. Although the crucifixion is worked out in fine detail, the whole piece re-

> tains the fundamental simplicity which constitutes a great part of the charm of Bufano's work."

The Wasp of July 11, 1925, gives a critical estimate of Bufano's work:

> "....The young artist has maturity, and his work is so bare of mannerism as to be distinguished. Rather he has a manner, chastened--almost purified. The economical craft, the absence of meretricious appeal, amount to a formalism so severe that it might be harsh. But Bufano is so Nordic in spirit, and it is Italianism that gives a tender touch to his austerities. Love of beauty is a test of the soul and the quality of that beauty the test of taste. Art is really monastic; sobriety, meditation, aloofness from a temporal world are its bases. The work is done by a hand obedient to a spirit--the communion of a soul with the eternal.
>
> "And yet it is almost primitive, with a restraint amounting to stoicism. It has the power of the impersonal, but ruggedness is softened by some imperceptible caress. It contains none of the qualities of chance, fear, destruction, that lurk in elemental nature.
>
> "Bufano is not dramatic, he does not play upon dread or horror, his Art is not cruel in its actualism. Here is a genius whose reserve contains humanity, realism in which the actual has found the eternal."

EUROPEAN EXHIBIT

This first comprehensive exhibition of Bufano's works executed in metal, wood, and glazed porcelain, attracted such wide attention when it was shown in New York, Chicago, and St. Louis in 1925-27, that Paul Verdier, who showed it at the City of Paris Galleries in San Francisco, arranged to send the exhibit to Paris, where Bufano was already well known. So

well received by the critics was the collection of Bufano's works, that they were shown in London, Berlin and Moscow. For eight years this exhibition and other collections sent out by the National Sculpture Society of New York were shown both in America and abroad, while Bufano was enduring the vicissitudes of poverty. However he journeyed around the world again in 1926 and covered his expenses by the sculpture and portraits which he executed along the way.

During the course of his travels, Bufano had lived in Paris for two years during 1928 and 1929 and founded the Society of the "Constructionistes," a current movement in art, and from 1928 to 1931 he published a magazine, the "Cercle Ecarre" (The Squared Circle) expressing the ideas of this group. Here he worked, among other things, on his black granite statue of Saint Francis of Assisi. An exhibition of his glazed sculpture was held at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco in 1929, and he showed works at Mills College, Oakland, during the same period.

The critic of the Argonaut of January 19, 1929, found Bufano's work, exhibited at the Palace of the Legion of Honor disappointing. He said:

> "....One of the pieces 'Head of a Woman' is quite fine for the simple massiveness of its design and the ruggedness suggested by its finish. A group called 'Mother with Children' also has in it some elements of good creative design, and a piece called 'Bust of a Young Girl' is pleasing for its simplicity. But aside from these three pieces, Bufano's porcelains prove to be too tritely descriptive to

be considered as artistically superior works. He has turned to the Orient for much of his subject matter, but in doing so he has caught none of the spirit of meaning of the Far East. It is all external, and therefore as completely 'surface' as are his glazes."

"Bufano's Terra-Cotta Sculpture Interesting" said the San Francisco Chronicle of January 27, 1929:

"These beautifully simplified pieces of sculpture reflect the definite style that has resulted from Beniamino Bufano's combination of Occidental and Oriental influences.

"Colored glazes embellish the simple forms of the head and figures Bufano has modeled. At times the effect is startling, as in the portrait of a man, when the entire head is in deep blue. Very evidently the color has been applied as color and for the sake of color rather than in any other way to make the representation of actuality closer. This results in the arousal of two reactions, one to the form, another to the color of Bufano's work. In some instances, these reactions may be widely separated or even opposing, in others they are more happily unified."

EXHIBITS AT PARIS SALON

A special cable to the New York Times from its Paris correspondent mentioned Bufano's works shown at the Autumn Salon in Paris as follows (November 1, 1927):

"Paris, October 31--Mr. Johannes, President of the jury of the 'Autumn Salon' which opens in the Grand Palais next Saturday, predicted today that the sensation of the approaching exhibition would probably be the work of the young American painter of Italian origin, Beniamino Bufano. 'His work is widely discussed at the present time and he is incontestably a very beautiful artist' said Mr. Johannes.

"Generally speaking, the exhibition will register another unmistakable step away from the fan-

tastic and 'isms' of recent years and back to the truly beautiful and objective in art."

Junius Cravens described Bufano's work in the Argus, February 1929, as follows:

> "Bufano has worked in the Orient and has drawn from there much of his subject matter. But the works he showed here were literal rather than interpretative and seemed to lack either imagination or creative impulse. The most valuable thing he had gathered from the Orient was a masterful technical use of glazing for terra-cotta. But he frequently resorted to the use of color--such as bright green for the flesh tones--to obtain a sensational effect, though the figures beneath the glaze were of a purely realistic character. The use of such methods resulted in the production of many inconsistent works."

Grace Hubbard said of Bufano's work in wood, exhibited for the first time, in the Argonaut of January 26, 1929:

> "....in these works of his, the personality of the artist is always apparent in a marked degree.
>
> "....four splendid examples of the recent works of Beniamino Bufano....two of these are figures carved in wood and two are figures in plaster, over life size. All are of the Monks, and according to Roi Partridge, Director of the Gallery 'in their beautiful simplicity they remind one of Giotto.' He says of them, 'up to the last minute in the modern point of view and treatment, these four statues, nevertheless, remind one strangely of the best in Oriental sculpture. Such work is an evidence indeed of this modern Italian-American sculptor, Bufano, he is able to gather together in his work the Gothic, Giotto and ultra-modernism."

RETURN TO AMERICA

After Bufano's return in 1931 from his second world tour, he visited the Indian pueblos in New Mexico and Arizona,

studying the Indian customs and ceremonials, their dances and the symbolism behind their ancient arts. Having known Governor Hunt of Arizona when Hunt was the American Minister to Siam, it was natural that Bufano should be selected by the Governor to arrange the American Indian collection and the collection of Oriental art which Hunt presented to the Museum in Phoenix.

While much of Bufano's best sculpture is in private collections, such as those of Albert Bender in San Francisco and Colonel Charles Erskine Scott Wood in Los Gatos, California, the traveling exhibitions sent by the National Sculpture Society to the large cities in America and Europe have made his work widely known. The Brooklyn Museum, New York, held several exhibitions in 1930 and 1931 at which Bufano was represented, and in 1932 devoted a whole room to his sculptures.

Much interesting material and a fresh point of view were presented in Bufano's exhibition at the Palace of the Legion of Honor, at which the sculptor showed pieces executed during his trip round the world. Upon his return to California he took a studio and settled down to live and work again in San Francisco.

The art critic of the News Letter and Wasp commented on Bufano's Saint Francis and on his exhibit at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, on October 1, 1932:

> "....Two of the artist's drawings, exhortations in pastel crayon, were hung with the exhibit of sculptor's drawings at the Palace of the Legion

> of Honor recently. Regardless of the overcrowded walls of the gallery, these two drawings stood out magnificently, compelling by their size and the vehemence of their language an unmasked and fearful attention.
>
> "One of these drawings was a study for the Saint Francis statue....The other drawing in the show was a poster of three horses, phlegmatic, lethargic, gross animals of toil. They bear no other malice to the world than the slowly, enunciating with heavy-footedness the slavery of thought, a word the world cannot condone."

THE BAY BRIDGE PROPOSAL

Always in the forefront of any progressive movement for artistic development in the city of his adoption, Bufano formed a group of sculptors in 1933 who proposed to give their services free to beautify the San Francisco Bay Bridge and its approaches with architectural sculpture, requiring only the cost of materials and their living expenses to be furnished them. Unfortunately, this public spirited proposal came to nothing. Joseph Danysh comments as follows in the Argonaut of July 22, 1933:

> "Beniamino Bufano, of the much controverted St. Francis fame, has formed a guild of sculptors who are offering their services for the beautification of the San Francisco Bay Bridge. These sculptors are ready to work as day laborers with only living expenses and material to work with as their remuneration. 'We will, of course, comply with the architectural design of the bridge,' said Bufano, 'and we will utilize the spaces at the two entrances to the bridge as well as the spaces in the span itself. We feel that San Francisco is worthy of this effort on our part, and it is our desire to make the bridge an outstanding artistic triumph as well as an architectural and engineering one.'"

BRAVE NEW ART

The News Letter and Wasp of February 11, 1933, comments on the Progressives' Show at the City of Paris Galleries where Bufano was represented:

> "'The Progressive Group' show at the City of Paris Galleries (sponsored by Joseph Danysh) may not have been or have assumed to be 'great art,' but it has undoubtedly been good entertainment, and healthily stimulated lively comment, speculation and controversy. The show itself is varied, and interesting in its very unevenness. Then the unexpected 'Change of Venue,' which transferred the exhibition from the stately Legion Palace to the comparatively frivolous department store setting, lent a pleasant touch of melodrama, and some excellent advertising.
>
> "No one minded that the gallery dimension presented some difficulty, forcing some of the canvases into an unfavorable light, and causing Bufano's malevolent red chalk panel, snarling an anathema at the end of the room, to seem to jump down the throats of visitors...."

The critic of the San Francisco News criticizes Bufano's work at the Second Progressives' Show at the Danysh Galleries, on October 27, 1934:

> "The most sensational sculpture in the show is 'X-ray' by Bufano, a colossal fish form in polished aluminum. In preparing the poor fish for market, the sculptor has removed not only its entrails but also its sides. The wire ribs thus left exposed suggest that the work might serve as a harp or a zither. 'X-ray' is theatrically effective, however, in a modern, Austrian sort of way. An electric light to shine through its blue glass eyes might convert it into a nice little lamp for the bedside table."

The Art Digest of New York quoted H. L. Dungan's criticism in the Oakland Tribune of November 15, 1934, of the Progressive Show at the Danysh Galleries, San Francisco:

"'At the time of my visit to the gallery, there was great excitement over Beniamino Bufano's fish, which is entitled 'X-Ray.' I was just overcoming the first dizziness which always overwhelms me when practically surrounded by modern art, when Ansel Adams bounded in with the grace of a fawn in the well-known ballet extraordinary. Joseph Danysh removed his pipe, and pointed to the fish with the stem thereof. Ruth Armer looked at me and then at the fish. I couldn't tell whether she thought we were both poor fish, or if she admired the fish.

"'Anyway, I took the fish in. It's about five or six or maybe four feet long, made of white metal, with blue glass eyes the size of $1 Mex. The spine is up top-side, where it should be, and the ribs (there is but one set of them) ran straight down from top to bottom. They are made of metal bars. The caudal appendage curves up gracefully. The first and second dorsal and ventral fins are omitted for the sake of art. The fish, for support, is attached slightly aft of the pelvic fin, to a black plush box.

"'Now, this fish is a good work of art, no denying. It has the dramatic appeal, and others, but I couldn't help but imagine what would happen if someone took it home and tried to hang it over the mantel or if he put it on the floor and stepped in it after a late night visit with a lodge brother. In fact, I have lost sleep, wondering what one could do with this tin fish--a good work of art six or four feet long--and the only solution I have is to change the metal bar ribs to harp strings and play sea chanteys on it.'"

MEDAL FOR SCULPTURE

Several exhibitions of Bufano's works were held in San Francisco in 1935, and at the Annual show of the Art Association held at the San Francisco Museum of Art, the medal for the first award in sculpture was given jointly to Beniamino Bufano's "Torso," executed in hammered copper, and to Sargent Johnson's terra-cotta piece, "Forever Free."

The critic of the San Francisco News, Junius Cravens, in commenting on the show of January 26, 1935, said:

> "....Among others, a bronze sculpture of a 'Torso,' by Beniamino Bufano, also is especially noteworthy. In subject, it is commonplace--the armless, legless, headless female, which is used as a subject sooner or later by most sculptors--and they all look more or less alike. But Bufano's bronze is exceptionally well executed, and he has achieved as beautiful a patina on the metal as I have seen on a modern work..."

An important exhibition opened at the San Francisco Museum of Art in August, entitled "Thirty Years of Sculpture in California," at which Bufano showed. The News Letter and Wasp of August 24, 1935, took occasion to praise Bufano and applaud governmental sponsorship of art as follows:

> "Bufano is represented by his most skilled piece of gilded bronze, 'Crucifixion of Youth' and his very fine 'Mandarin,' a glazed terracotta, in which he used crushed jade, achieving a color and texture rarely obtained in ordinary glazing.
>
> "What of the Administration making it possible for the best sculptors, such as Bufano, and wood-carvers such as Jacques Schnier, to launch important projects, open stoneyards, build kilns, outfit wood-carving studios and shops, where the most talented artists might assist the master in working on cooperative works, which would demand an alliance of several mediums?"

At the same exhibit, Bufano's "Crucifixion of Youth" wins praise from Nadia Lavrova in the Christian Science Monitor of June 15, 1935:

> "Beniamino Bufano's fine bronze cross, 'The Crucifixion of Youth,' is undoubtedly the most important piece of work produced by this talented and versatile sculptor. The figure on the

cross is that of a handsome youth, and at the base there is a frieze of children's figures. The conception is full of tragic poetry.

"Other works by Bufano include glazed terra-cotta heads in color. The glazes are made of crushed jade and quartz. They are colored with pigments obtained by precipitation of copper, gold, lapis and iron. Their subjects range from portrait studies of children, to those of Chinese, modeled by the sculptor during his sojourn in the Orient."

STUDIO DESTROYED BY FIRE

While the sculptor was busily working, showing at exhibitions and teaching, for the second time a fire gutted his studio. He lost all the contents of his stable-studio in Lafayette Square--possessions which he had painstakingly acquired since the loss of his Chinese and Far East Collection in his first fire in Berkeley. The San Francisco Chronicle of November 13, 1935, described the tragic loss:

"Last night there wandered through historic Lafayette Square, a pale and tortured little figure. He was like a small disheveled ghost as he crept through the still smoldering ruins of his home, searching frantically for some trace of the treasures that had been destroyed yesterday afternoon by fire.

"For many years Beniamino Bufano, internationally famous sculptor, has known the most desperate tragedy. Poverty has dogged his footsteps. Marital difficulties have broken the calm of his life. But, always he has had his works of art, his drawings, his paintings, his pieces of sculpture to bring him solace.

"Yesterday they too went, as flames demolished his shabby little shack that adjoins the old Holladay home in Lafayette Square. How the fire started, no one knows.

"Bufano had left his home only a short while before the fire started. Therefore, he was spared the agony of seeing firemen destroy the walls upon which hung his oils, tempera, crayon, charcoal, plaster and wood sketches.

"Mercifully, he was not forced to witness the destruction of his head of Christ, or his sheet-copper study of St. Francis of Assisi.

"A few of his friends and patrons were there, to watch the unhappy cremation of Bufano's stupendous works, many weeping as the flames gained headway, even under hissing streams of water.

"His gigantic study of the patron saint of San Francisco became white hot, then followed an equally gigantic hand to the ground.

"The razing of Bufano's shack represents a loss of perhaps $100,000. The razing of his artistic works represents a loss that is impossible to compute in terms of dollars and cents.

"His home and superb creations are lost forever, and without them he is no longer a genius, but a slightly bewildered little man, who has no place to go."

ST. FRANCIS IN BLACK GRANITE

Long study of the life of Saint Francis of Assisi led Bufano to conceive of a monument to him to be erected on one of the San Francisco hills. It was not until his stay in Paris in 1930, however, that his statue of St. Francis crystallized; hewn from a 32 ton block of black Swedish granite, it stood twenty-two feet in height.

"Before returning to San Francisco in 1931, the sculptor stored his statue in a Paris warehouse where it remained, held by an attachment for debt, while friends and patrons backing him were engaged in a series of disputes with

the San Francisco Art Commission, over both the appropriateness of the statue and the site where it should be placed.

On December 20, 1933, it was formally approved by the Art Commission for acceptance by the city. This resulted in an exhibition of preliminary sketches, models, working plans and photographs of Bufano's St. Francis which was held in February 1934, at the Adams-Danysh Galleries, San Francisco. At the same exhibition, Bufano showed a group of his sculptures hewn from the black granite cut from under the arms of his statue of the saint.

The exhibition stirred up a storm of controversy and gave Bufano a great deal of publicity. Indignant citizens wrote to the newspapers, condemning the statue as an atrocity, while artists rose in its defense. The San Francisco Chronicle, February 4, 1934, quotes Bufano:

> "'Critics will, perhaps call my St. Francis too modern,' said Bufano. 'But, to my way of thinking, the idea of this beautiful spirit who gave everything and asked nothing in return, must manifest itself in every changing form of art.
>
> "'The St. Francis of the Renaissance is vastly different from the Gothic, and by the same token the St. Francis of today must be expressed according to the Modern spirit.
>
> "'My admiration of this sky-clad soul, who sought salvation in the open hills, and in every creature or thing who spoke the language of nature, is so great that this statue of him is my offering, to perpetuate his memory in the city I love so well.'"

Junius Cravens criticized Bufano's St. Francis in the San Francisco News, February 3, 1934

"While I feel that Bufano's sculpture fails as a satisfying symbol of the pre-eminent personality of Thirteenth Century Italy, his granite figure is probably worthy of a place in San Francisco. But, unless it differs greatly from the sculptures in his present exhibition, I feel that it might as well be called Buddha or Mohammed or Friar John--as St. Francis. The last thing I would demand in such a figure would be objective realism. But I resent inane effigies of a great man. And I want something more than an artificial, subjective surface."

Glenn Wessels in the Argonaut of February 2, 1934, came out strongly in favor of the statue after viewing the models:

"....there sculptures and drawings are the outward expression of a belief, paralleling that of St. Francis, a philosophic realism, a belief in the reality of the idea, rather than in the appearance, which corresponds to the Oriental Tao.

"Here is the valid expression of inner conviction, made superlatively effective by consummate craftmanship. What if it is not the spirit of our time? What if it is not the American scene? It is nevertheless important and beautiful and true, the objectification of a living faith."

Again, in the Argonaut of March 2, 1934, he says:

"It is not a doctrinaire St. Francis, it is not a literal St. Francis, but it is the exemplification in eternal stone of the qualities endearing this character to the world.

"Is there any better voucher for the straightforwardness and independence of Bufano's St. Francis? Where is there another man who has devoted years of toil to the expression of this idea in stone as sincerely as has Beniamino Bufano? Who can speak more authoritatively for a universal, not sectarian, expression of the spirit of this dogma-breaking saint? Where is there a monument, which sums up in itself the best of the past and the knowledge of the present, expressed in unimpeachable craftmanship?

And Glenn Wessels warningly continues:

> "Look out, dear public, that some successor does not capitalize on the furore caused by the only real, original St. Francis idea designed for San Francisco. Designed with regard to the juncture of Oriental and Occidental ideas, planned in the spirit of the man himself before he became (after six official condemnations), perforce canonized.
>
> "This statue is not an affair for the church alone to judge, nor is it an affair for politicians to juggle. It should become a public cause."

A group of the sculptor's friends and art patrons in San Francisco formed the Bufano St. Francis Committee to pay the charges and transportation and liquidate the $2,000 attachment on the work. Although Bufano spent years in research and experiment and donated his work as an artist as well as the black granite from which the statue was hewn, and though, in 1934, the French line offered to transport the statue from Paris free of charge in recognition of it as a work of art, the city, which now has jurisdiction over the statue since the Art Commission gave its final approval in 1935, refuses to select a site for it, and Bufano's first heroic St. Francis languishes unseen in Paris.

ST. FRANCIS IN STAINLESS STEEL

Undiscouraged, Bufano conceived a new idea--a gigantic St. Francis, 180' high, executed directly in an absolutely new medium, stainless steel, with a face of copper, impervious to time or weather. It was designed to stand on Twin Peaks,

overlooking the city of San Francisco. Immediately a heated controversy arose. The conservative Art Commission rejected the statue twice; citizens aroused to indignation but confused by frivolous newspaper treatment of the subject, argued for a conventional saint with stone birds perched around him, as one critic said, "like the birds on Nellie's hat"; artists rose in Bufano's defense, and a petition signed by one hundred and forty seven prominent local artists was presented to the Commission. Editorials and letters appeared in the newspapers and Bufano became the most publicized sculptor in America since Gutzon Borglum and his monument in the Black Hills of Dakota. Art circles in San Francisco seethed, and the public was, for the first time, aroused to take interest in a work of art. This battle was even more heated than the closed controversy over the revolutionary modern murals in the Coit Tower on Telegraph Hill (a controversy limited mainly to artists and politicians), because the Tower already existed in fact, whereas public opposition felt that the proposed St. Francis constituted a threat to its beloved San Francisco skyline.

At the rejection of the statue by the Art Commission, Glenn Wessels wrote in the Argonaut of December 11, 1936:

> "Only the most conservative members of the Art Community seem to be anti-St. Francis, and the younger contemporary minded group say that this time they are going to put it over.
>
> "The pro-St. Francis people point out that the artist members of the Art Commission voted in the main for the Statue--that it was the non-artist faction plus the telegraphed opinion of

> conservative sculptor, Edgar Walter, which turned it down. Walter's kind of sculpture may be seen in the bas-reliefs which decorate either side of the proscenium arch in the Municipal Opera House. It is at the opposite pole from the simple, geometrical style, which Bufano's friends say is based upon the opinion of the best of Oriental and modern Occidental monumental work."

When the Art Commission again rejected his St. Francis statue on December 23, 1936, Bufano was furious; shaking with anger, he exclaimed, "Bah! I am on trial before a pack of old women who know nothing about art."

ART CIRCLES DEFEND MODERN ST. FRANCIS

Led by Gertrude Atherton, Dr. Mariana Bertola and Mrs. Frederick Colburn, the attacking party termed the statue "hideous," "that wooden thing," and "it looks like a hold-up." The San Francisco News of December 31, 1936, continued:

> "'A hold-up, they call my statue,' moaned Bufano clutching his hair. 'It's these women who are perpetrating a hold-up. They're trying to hold up work on my statue.'
>
> 'Otis Oldfield, well-known painter interrupted heatedly: 'San Francisco is satisfied with such atrocities as the rah-rah statue of Marshall at Mason and Market streets, and that angel-on-a-ball in Union Square, nothing but photographic taxidermy in stone.
>
> "'The trouble is, most people are used to the objective art of the Victorian period. Bufano's statue is subjective art. It is the crystallization of a great emotion, not a copy of a portrait.
>
> "'What do people want?' asked Lucien Labaudt, noted oil and fresco painter. 'Bufano has captured the soul and mind of St. Francis. The head is the most beautiful thing I have ever

seen. The arms uplifted in blessing are neither Catholic, Baptist nor Buddhist, but universal."

To which Matthew Barnes, winner of the first Anne Bremer Purchase prize of the 1937 San Francisco Art Association exhibit, added:

"'That statue of St. Francis will do more for San Francisco than anything else has. If people can't see the stupendousness of it, it's just too bad. Bufano has put his whole soul into it. Put the statue up on Twin Peaks and the city will learn to love it."

Joseph Danysh, regional WPA art adviser, on the basis of the petition asking the Art Commission to accept Bufano's statue and signed by 147 prominent local artists, declared:

"Heretofore, lack of professional artist's opinions has been one of the reasons for the disapproval of the statue. Edgar Walter exercised absent influence on the Art Commission by sending nine telegrams from Washington characterizing the statue as 'lacking in dignity' though he has never seen the model.

"The project will give employment to many needy artists and it should be put through."

John D. Barry, who had first met young Bufano at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915,wrote in the San Francisco News of December 21, 1936:

"When the Works Progress Administration was organized in this part of the world, no one could question the right of Bufano to be among the sculptors at work there. Again he felt attracted to St. Francis as a subject. And again he produced a very original model for a statue. That model I saw the other day at the office of our Art Commission in the City Hall. It impressed me as remarkable. Like many of the old

masters, Bufano had developed the conception in wood. The texture of our redwood served him well.

"What I liked most about the statue was its simplicity. It suggested the Italian primitives. With both hands raised, head bent forward slightly, St. Francis in traditional robe, stood giving a blessing.

"When I went away and thought over what I had seen, I felt confirmed in my opinion that as a WPA worker Bufano had offered a statue we could be proud of."

A letter from Ray Boynton, San Francisco artist, defending Bufano's statue, appeared in the San Francisco News of December 22, 1936:

"It is daring and it is unique and it is imaginative. It has the purity that distinguishes great art--especially great religious art--from everything else. The whole conception is a challenge to the imagination, and it will remain a challenge to generations of people after we are dead. It is probable the most original conception of St. Francis since Giotto's frescoes. It is uniquely modern in its material and execution and timeless in its form. No one else in this country could conceive and execute it."

Although the artists generally were in favor of Bufano's statue, one mural artist, Frank Bergman, wrote in the same issue of the News:

"I'd hate to see a statue on, or near Twin Peaks--either Bufano's or anyone else's. Putting statuary on elevated spots is a strange human weakness. A hill top should be crowned (if it has to be crowned) only with truly monumental architecture.

"I object to saints--Bufano's or anyone else's. To have a symbol of love looking down upon our 'man-eat-man' civilization with so many of our neighbors hungry, would be the meanest irony

> and hypocrisy. I mean this in the wider sense, and not as a reflection against one individual.
>
> "Wise old Charles Erskine Scott Wood once said: 'Christianity has never been practiced.' Please let's forget all the saints."

Religious views on the sculptor's conception of St. Francis differed as sharply as those of the general public. Archbishop Mitty of San Francisco gave warm approval to Bufano's statue, writing to the Art Commission at its session of December 23, 1936, that "Bufano's statue of St. Francis will be a tremendous asset to the city and it will become one of the most distinctive, outstanding monuments throughout the world." He even sent Father Meehan as his personal representative to the final hearing of the Art Commission to speak in favor of the statue when the decision hung by a hair. The Franciscan Order on the contrary, with Father George as their spokesman, wanted the usual conventional stone saint. The Protestant churches took a hand in the dispute, expressing their approval through Dr. Jason Nobel Pierce, pastor of the First Congregational Church and president of the San Francisco Federation of Churches. The San Francisco News of January 2, 1937, quoted him as saying:

> "A statue of peace like this St. Francis would be eminently fitting. I advocate its erection, as soon as possible, on a suitable elevated spot. I don't say it should necessarily be Twin Peaks, though I like the idea myself. St. Francis, especially as conceived by Bufano, has nothing to do with Catholicism. He belongs to the whole world."

When defending his statue before the Board of Supervisors, whose assent was necessary to the statue's erection after the acceptance by the Art Commission, the sculptor declared: "I have tried to make this statue the symbol of a new religion. It symbolizes the brotherhood of man--stripped of pretense--as close to a universal interpretation as I could make it."

The session of the Art Commission on February 3, 1937 that approved Bufano's model, was the stormiest--and the one which aroused most public interest--in the history of the staid and conservative commission. It was so thronged with artists, spectators and reporters, all holding decided opinions and expressing them freely, that the meeting had to be held in a larger room in the City Hall. Press comment in Eastern magazines, as well as in local newspapers, is voluminous.

Opposition members of the Art Commission attempted to get designs for a statue of Saint Francis through an open competition, thinking, no doubt, that the cost of holding such a competition and the length of time necessarily consumed would block the project altogether. But Joseph Danysh, regional WPA art adviser, retorted that few American sculptors had either the background or the ability to make such a gigantic statue, and that Bufano was the only sculptor working directly in the new medium, stainless steel. Also he said that it was not fair to judge a gigantic 180' statue of stainless steel to be erected on top of a hill, from an 8' model carved

out of wood and copper, which was on exhibit in a small committee room.

When that line of attack failed, several members who opposed the statue wished to have changes made in the sculptor's model, especially objecting to the position of the hands, flung on high. One member even suggested that "they looked like the hands of a gunman's hold-up victim."

Bufano retorted: "I am perfectly willing to make reasonable changes, but naturally, I cannot make enough alterations to suit every member of the Art Commission. I have made a hundred models already." When someone criticized his statue for not having patches in his robe, Bufano replied that he was a sculptor and not a tailor, that a man in patches might be noble, but a stone figure in patches was a botch.

After more heated and bitter discussion, Bufano, when given the floor, vehemently thundered: "Art Marches on! What if I went into a bank, and said practices of the mediaeval ages must be instituted? The bank would eventually have to close down. Art has changed, just like banking. No one could create a work of art acceptable to all of you. But you are the jury."

Cheers and roars of applause greeted Bufano's speech. When a vote was taken, the members were deadlocked seven to seven, with Herbert Fleishhacker, who held three votes, leading the opposition. It was San Francisco's Mayor Angelo J. Rossi, called in to break the deadlock, who cast the deciding vote in favor of Bufano's statue.

Bufano's metal Saint Francis was proposed as a WPA art project by Joseph Danysh, regional art adviser for the WPA, and by William Gaskin, local supervisor. The cost of the statue was to come out of public funds and included the inner core of cement, the cement pedestal and the structural steel, as well as the salaries of the artisans--varying from 14 to 40 workers. Copper for the face and hands of the figure, and the outer sheathing of stainless steel, have been offered free by metal companies. The weight of the gigantic statue will be about sixty-five tons; the metal sheathing for the torso and robes will be one-eighth of an inch thick. Concealed from view will be a bath to attract birds, as Bufano thinks that living birds flying around the saint will be much more in keeping than birds hewn from stone. A spiral staircase inside the statue will lead up to the head and an observation platform.

However, this is not a complete victory for the progressive artists and Bufano, for acceptance by the Art Commission merely means an aesthetic approval, and now the project is in the hands of the Board of Supervisors, who, at the time of writing (1937), have not made any appropriations for its construction.*

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*See Monograph on Ruth Cravath, Vol. 16 Page 135 of this series.

CRITICISM IN PUBLIC PRESS

The heated controversy over the statue made front page news for the San Francisco newspapers for months, and even after it was settled in Bufano's favor, indignant citizens still wrote to the papers, protesting the statue of Saint Francis. Editorial comment in the San Francisco News of February 2, 1937, stated:

> "We don't know just how Bufano's 180-foot stainless steel statue of the city's patron saint will look when it arises on Christmas Tree Point just under Twin Peaks. We don't believe members of the Art Commission know.
>
> "What we do know is that Bufano is a sculptor of remarkable talent, many think genius, that the execution of his plans in stainless steel, donated by the steel companies, is an extremely interesting thing in itself, and that at its worst the statue--of a size so commanding that it will attract world-wide attention--will be more sightly than some of the apartment houses that already rise like huge chimney-pots from our hill-tops.
>
> "Incidentally, the statue will give employment to a large number of sculptors working under Bufano on this most spectacular of WPA projects."

In his column in the San Francisco News of January 7, 1937, John D. Barry made the most pertinent comment yet uttered on the public interest aroused in the Bufano Saint Francis controversy:

> "The controversy over Bufano's statue of St. Francis impresses me as almost wholly good. Seldom does a community become excited over such a matter. For public discussion it's obviously far more profitable than the most recent scandal or murder.

"The ele ment of ridicule that has been introduced is to be regretted. There's nothing ridiculous about the projected statue. It comes from a thoroughly trained and a remarkably expert craftsman. I suppose his being so removed from much of the present-day sculpture makes his conception appear funny to some people. The unfamiliar is easy to laugh at.

"Nothing I can think of excuses ridiculing the material used by Bufano for his models. Redwood he finds convenient to work in. Those who deride the models as 'wooden' merely play on a word. The old masters in sculpture didn't scorn wood for developing their schemes. Bufano's models in wood merely suggest the effect to be worked out in a colossal figure of stainless steel.

"It would be a glory to San Francisco if the colossal figure, developed so appropriately, with such reverence and simplicity, were to be erected in a dominating position. Twin Peaks would be the ideal place.

"No one can say there's anything Victorian about the work of a man like Bufano. It's founded in the qualities that relate him, not to grotesque and transient fashions, but to principles that are fundamental."

As soon as the stainless steel statue was finally approved, clamor arose over the estimated amount required for its upkeep by the Park Commission, who disclaimed this responsibility, claiming that to keep the steel and copper monument bright and shining would cost about $10,000 a year. However, the Park Commission said that they had set aside $9,000 for the irrigation of the mountain, and would beautify and care for it, so that it should be green with natural verdure throughout the year.

STAINLESS STEEL AS NEW ART MEDIUM

This stainless steel statue of the mediaeval saint will be almost impervious to time or the elements; the stainless steel will be made of a new alloy, containing two percent of white glass, in addition to its iron, chromium, carbon and manganese content.

A letter from S. Craig Alexander of the Allegheny Steel Company, written to the San Francisco Chronicle, February 12, 1937 is of interest as coming from an expert. He wrote:

> "In the letters of criticism in the Chronicle's People's Safety Valve, of the proposed Bufano statue of St. Francis to be erected on Twin Peaks, stainless steel, as a medium of artistic and architectural expression had in several cases been brought in for criticism in disparaging terms, as, for example, in the expression 'colossal, stainless steel egg cup.'
>
> "Without reference to the artistic merits of the Bufano creation, but with reference solely to stainless steel as a material for art and architectural work, such an implication is unfair to this material which is a versatile medium, and has enormous possibilities for artistic and architectural expression.
>
> "Far from being a 'cheap' material, stainless steel is the finest of the commercial metals of alloys, and is not infrequently referred to as 'popular priced platinum.' Its possibilities for the artist and the architect are just beginning to be realized.
>
> "The medium, moreover, embodies the essentials and provides a versatile range of possibilities, from finest detail to utmost simplicity, for the exercise of the creative ability of the artist and the skill of the craftsman."

BUFANO'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Bufano's personality is indicative of the true artist. Once, when bereft of his studio, he worked out on the sand-dunes of a San Francisco beach for months, hammering and shaping the metal of a statue, undeterred by the bitter winds and cold fogs from the Pacific. Another time when he was to be paid eighteen hundred dollars, but never collected the money because he had not signed a contract, he shrugged his shoulders and waved his hands, as if to push material things away, saying, "As for the money, it is nothing--I do not care."

Bufano has set down fully an explanation of his philosophy of life and conception of the meaning of art, and a portion of his manuscript, which also seeks to explain the destructive attitude of art critics, may be quoted here:

> "Art has nothing to do with the whims of human beings. Art is purely a spiritual thing. It is collective thought; and all creative forms are but an echo of God--the religious interpretation of the soul. The beauty in man is God. The beauty in God is man. The collective beauty in both is Art....born out of the bosom of the Universe. Inexhaustible as space, it is neither new nor old; it is the spontaneous voice bridging the chasm of all thought...."

He then goes on to say that the savage, ephemeral criticism of the contemporary critic arises out of a soul-blindness (resulting from civilization) which prevents their achieving any universality of thought or feeling. This, however, can have nothing to do with the artist, who should ob-

serve "the characteristic forms of nature," hearken to his own imagination, and express his art, in his life as well as in his chosen medium, approaching his work with a pure heart and an open mind.

He insists that "a true artist lives for his art, which he loves for itself, not as a means of securing fleeting earthly pleasures or fame," and that the artist is "the means through which beauty is crystallized." He reminds his readers that the "new" school of Cubism existed among Japanese wood-carvers four hundred years ago, and that the giants of modern painting, Cezanne, Picasso, and Matisse, are only striving for the childlike approach in an attempt to capture that spontaneity which is the hallmark of any true art.

He deplores the sad fact that the great majority who blindly follow such masters usually succeed only in achieving a sort of "manufactured eccentricity" and a set of traditional terms without meaning. His own reverence is reserved for the art of the ancients--particularly that art resulting from the cultures of the Far East. In them, he says, one may find a true interpretation wherein all branches of art, without any sacrifice of spontaneity, are blended into one symphonic whole.

Personally, he is convinced of the Taoist precept: that the impulse to genius lies in all men, but that only in artists is it alert; that the creations of the true artist, in which this impulse is strongly developed, must be beautiful

because anything other than beauty has become alien to him. Hence, for the artist, the one law is that there shall be no law, only the simplicity and purity which admits of spontaneous creation because it cannot help itself.

In his concluding remarks on his own philosophy of art he says:

> "....One can do no more than (attempt).... to approach as nearly as possible a spiritual medium through the limitations of all too human formulae....Art comes to us as naturally as rain falls....We put the little seed into the earth; the seed sprouts to a plant. The plant gives forth the bud. Then the bud flowers to bloom; the blossom gives back the seed; the seed goes back to the earth....Through reform we by no means rise to a more enlightened state of being....Reformation is but a stupid, sentimental human weakness....We do not need to reform, but to be transformed."

OTHER STATUES BY BUFANO

The new sculptural medium, (stainless steel) in which Bufano works, will be used in other statues than the Saint Francis. Under the auspices of WPA, as a tribute to the Chinese in San Francisco, a monument to Dr. Sun Yat Sen (illustrated in this monograph), founder of the Chinese Republic, will be placed in Saint Anne Park, off Grant Avenue, in the heart of Chinatown. The torso will be of stainless steel, while the head of the philosopher will be hewn of red granite. Bufano made the studies of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, he says, as well as a porcelain bust, while staying at the leader's house in Canton and fighting by his side during the Chinese Revolution. A statue of Bach, the great musician, also to be made of

imperishable steel, is to stand in one of San Francisco's parks. A red granite statue of Dr. Louis Pasteur, for the High School in San Rafael is also nearing completion.

Bufano is working indefatigably and directing a corps of artisans, metal-workers and stone-cutters. He is the only artist working in stainless steel, and as he works directly, without first modeling in clay and then casting in metal, an absolutely new technique must be developed--and this is what Bufano is teaching his artisans.

Harsh and oftentimes unfair criticisms only stimulate and encourage Bufano to continue striving, obeying his own convictions. Always through the ages, the challenging and stimulating in art have bred controversy. And when vitality is combined with humility, faith and perseverance, as is the case with Bufano, it would be exceedingly unwise to accept adverse criticism as proof of failure, for these are the intrinsic attributes of the pioneer. His popular recognition may not come at once, but when it does, it should be lasting.

BENIAMINO BUFANO

REPRESENTATIVE

WORKS

SCULPTURES:

The Immigrants, Whitney Prize, $500, New York, 1915
Panels of Art, 20 feet high, Palace of Fine Arts, Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco. Also worked on figure groups for The Court of the Universe on the Arch of Triumph. 1915
Chinese Couple, (called also Honeymoon Couple), glazed terra-cotta, Metropolitan Museum, New York. A copy is in the San Francisco Museum of Art. 1925
Mother and Two Children, (Group. Owned by Mrs. S. Stern) 1925
Bust of Colonel Charles Erskine Scott Wood, Los Gatos, California 1925
Saint Francis, 22-ft. black granite statue, Paris, 1928
Head of a Young Woman, (glazed terra-cotta), San Francisco Museum of Art 1929
X-Ray, (fish in hammered copper) 1934
Torso, (hammered copper) 1935
Monument to Dr. Sun Yat Sen, (stainless steel, with red granite head) for St. Anne's Square, Chinatown, San Francisco, California 1937
Statue of Sebastian Bach, musician, for one of San Francisco's parks 1937
Dr. Louis Pasteur, (red granite) for High School, San Rafael, California 1937
Crucifixion of Youth, (metal, colored). (Albert M. Bender Collection. Lent to the San Francisco Museum of Art).
Head of a Child, (terra-cotta)
Head of an Old Woman, (glazed terra-cotta)
Panels in plaster, Mills College, Oakland, California (gift of Albert M. Bender to the Mills College Art Gallery).

DRAWINGS:

Drawings and sketches of Saint Francis, San Francisco, 1934

ETCHINGS:

Head of a Child, San Francisco Museum of Art

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:

Albert M. Bender, San Francisco, California
Crucifixion of Youth, (bronze) Loaned to the San Francisco Museum of Art
Man of Sorrows
Two Friends

Charles Erskine Scott Wood, Los Gatos, California
Bust of Charles Erskine Scott Wood

Mrs. Sigmund Stern, San Francisco, California
Mother and Children

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS:

Metropolitan Museum, New York
Honeymoon Couple (glazed terra cotta)

San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, California
The Chinese Couple (glazed terra cotta) Bender Collection
Young Woman's Head and Bust (glazed terra cotta) Bender Collection
Child (etching) Bender Collection
Crucifixion of Youth (metal) Loaned by Albert M. Bender

EXHIBITIONS:

San Francisco, California
Palace of Fine Arts, 1922

City of Paris Galleries
First one-man show after his return to San Francisco from his Oriental visit
The Last of the Christians (bronze) 1925
First "Progressives" Exhibition, sponsored by Joseph Danysh, 1933
Second "Progressives" Exhibition, sponsored by Joseph Danysh
X-Ray (fish in hammered copper) 1934

California Palace of the Legion of Honor
Head of a Woman, 1929
Mother with Children (group) 1929
Bust of a Young Girl, 1929
Study of Saint Francis (drawing) 1932
The Three Horses " 1932

Adams-Danysh Galleries
Saint Francis models and drawings, 1934
Twin Peaks (black granite sculpture) 1934

San Francisco Museum of Art
Torso (hammered copper) Medal of First Award, 1935
Crucifixion of Youth, 1936-37
Glazed terra cotta sculpture, 1936-37

Oakland, California
Mills College Art Gallery, 1929

New York City
Art Students' League
Prizes for Drawing, Sculpture, and composition 1913-15

Whitney Exhibition
The Immigrants (Whitney Prize, $500) 1915

Arden Galleries, 1925
Glazed terra cotta heads and groups
The Two Friends
Crucifixion
Benia (bust)

Brooklyn Museum, 1930-1931-1932
Devoted a whole room to his sculpture

Paris, France
Salon d' Automne, 1927

Also comprehensive showing of his works executed in glazed porcelain, in metal and in wood, in New York, Chicago, St. Louis, 1925-1927

AWARDS

Whitney Exhibition, New York
Whitney Prize ($500), for "The Immigrants," 1915

Art Students' League, New York
Prizes for Drawing, Sculpture and Composition, 1913-1915

San Francisco Art Association, San Francisco, California,
Medal of First Award for his "Torso," 1935

CLUBS:

Member:
San Francisco Art Association
National Sculpture Society, New York
Cercle Ecarre, Paris, France
"Cut Direct" Group of Seven, Paris, France.

BENIAMINO BUFANO

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